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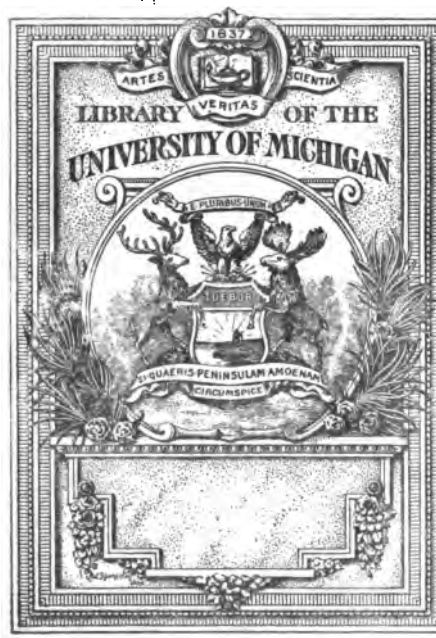
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THE DESPATCH BOAT "FRANCE" LYING AT ANCHOR IN ODESSA HARBOR

THE CABLE GAME

THE ADVENTURES OF AN AMERICAN PRESS-BOAT IN TURKISH WATERS DURING THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

BY

STANLEY WASHBURN

BOSTON
SHERMAN, FRENCH & COMPANY
1912

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer gratefully acknowledges the constant support and unlimited backing accorded him by THE CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, the paper for which he worked, and MR. VICTOR F. LAWSON, its Publisher, whose never failing enterprise in the realms of World News made this narrative of THE CABLE GAME possible.

S. W.

237097

INTRODUCTION

It has seemed worth while to set down the account of the experiences reported in the following pages, not because they represent any important achievement, nor yet because they are conspicuous for any unusual enterprise, for none realizes better than the writer that they comprise nothing more than the day's work, for the dozens of newspaper men that wander the earth.

As a lover of the Profession these few little adventures are narrated in the hope that they may serve as an interpretation to the lay reader of the motives of the men that go forth to gather the news of the world. Fame, money and reputation are all secondary considerations to the real journalist and what he does he does for his Paper and for the pure joy of the game that he plays.

What the writer has tried to portray is the atmosphere and fascination of THE CABLE GAME—the game that takes a man far from home 'midst alien races and into strange lands and makes him stake his all in his effort to win that goal of the journalist's ambition—A World Beat.

S. W.

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CHAPTER I

From War to Peace in Manchuria—Peking—A New Assignment, "Russia Direct"—Shanghai.

For three days we had been congratulating ourselves that we were on the eve of the greatest battle in history. Around us in silent might, two armies slept on their arms. From the border of far Mongolia for a hundred and eighty miles eastward lay the line of the Japanese trenches, and for forty miles deep every Manchu hut and village sheltered the soldier or coolie patriot of the Island Emperor. Above the roads for endless miles hung the heavy powdered dust of Mongol soil; like a mist unstirred by any wind, it rose from the plodding of the feet of limitless thousands of men and animals, pushing forward for the last great struggle of a mighty conflict. Regiment after regiment fresh from home, poured along the Japanese made arteries, for the blood of an army corps. Now and again the khaki colored battalions at the command of an officer halted at the side of the road while a battery of artillery, with clanking chains and creaking limbers, trotted through the thickening clouds of dust that settled on one like flour. Cavalry, red cross, transport, coolies, bridge trains and tele-

graph corps gave place the one to the other in rapid succession. In eighteen months' association with the Japanese we had not seen such activity. "The Peace Conference at Portsmouth has failed" we told ourselves, and leaving the extreme front of the army, where we had been visiting the cavalry outposts, we turned our horses' heads for the thirty-mile ride to the headquarters of General Nogi, to which we had been attached since May. All our talk was of the coming of the great battle and of the preparations which we must make for a three weeks' campaign in the saddle, and more important still, how we should arrange an open line of communications from the ever-changing front of the prospective struggle to the cable office in the rear.

Covered with dust an eighth of an inch deep, we rode into Fakumen, our headquarters, late on the afternoon of September 4th. At the door of a Chinese bean mill, where for four weary months we had been awaiting the call to action, stood a Japanese orderly. As we dismounted, he saluted and respectfully handed me one of the Japanese charactered envelopes of the Military field telegraph. Turning my horse over to my Japanese boy I opened it, and read the word "Return."

The Russo-Japanese War was over, and even before the armies themselves knew that the end had come, my chief in his office in far away Chicago had sent the word over the cable which

meant as much as reams of explanation. The same night the *London Times* reached half around the world and ordered home its special correspondent with the Japanese armies in the field.

That night I handed in at the Chinese mudhouse, where the telegraph ticked cheerfully over the hundreds of miles of Manchurian plains and Korean mountains to Fusan, and thence by cable to Nagasaki and the civilized world, a short dispatch to my office in Chicago, "Leaving the front immediately. Wire instructions Peking." Two days later at sunrise we took our leave. I shall not soon forget our leave-taking from the army whose fortunes we had followed off and on for nearly eighteen months. So many of the correspondents left the "front" with such bitter feelings toward their erstwhile hosts that, in justice to the Japanese, it is but fair to chronicle that in one Army of the Mikado at least the relations between the staff and the soldiers of the press were anything but unpleasant, and that we, who left the Third Army that September morning, left with only the tenderest affection toward the commander under whose shadow we had lived, slept and thought these many months—that is General Baron Nogi—than whom no finer gentleman, ardent patriot and gentle friend ever drew the breath of life. The night before our departure the general entertained us at a farewell banquet and in a kindly little toast bade us godspeed on our journey. That night we shook the

hands of all the staff whom we had known so well, and went to our quarters thinking that we had seen them for the last time, for we were to leave at daybreak for the long ride to the railroad. The next morning as we were mounting our horses to begin our journey an orderly from headquarters rode up and said that Major General Ichinohe (Nogi's Chief of Staff and right-hand man during the siege of Port Arthur) had requested that we stop at headquarters on our way out of town. So it was that accompanied by the small cavalry escort that had been detailed to see us to the railroad, we rode into the compound where Nogi and his staff had lived that last long summer of the war.

Mounted on a coal black horse in full dress uniform, with half a dozen of his staff about him, sat old Ichinohe, a tall, gaunt man nearing sixty, whose life typifies the ideal of Japanese chivalry. Spartan in his simplicity and endurance, fearless as a lion in battle, and gentle as a woman in time of peace, we had known him almost since the war started. At Port Arthur he had commanded the Sixth Brigade of the Ninth Division, which, more than any other, had borne the heat and burden of the day. We had known him then, when sword in hand he had led in person his brigade against one of the most impregnable redoubts on the crest of that all but unconquerable fortress. Twice his column had been thrown back shattered and bleeding, but on the third as-

sault, and just as the light of day was breaking in the East, this redoubtable man covered with blood and powder, and with his broken sword clutched in his hand, placed the Sun Flag on a position that the Russians had regarded as beyond possibility of capture. It was impossible to realize that this kindly old gentleman, who spoke so gently to us that morning in distant Manchuria, was the desperate commander who had been decorated by the Mikado for his invincible attack on the famous redoubt before Port Arthur's bloody trenches.

He met us with that smile which we had come to know and love, and bade his interpreter tell us that he and his staff would ride with us out of the town and see us started on our journey. So, with the staff riding about us, with clatter of saber and ring of spur, we rode through the old winding stonewall flanked street of Fakumen to the main gate of the town. Here the road winds out over a bridge that crosses the little river that wends its way down from the pass in the mountains three miles beyond and through which led our way that morning. The sun had just risen and its first copper-colored rays turned the dew on the grass to drops of brilliants. Away and away stretched the Oriental landscape with the hills standing out in the background in the clear, crisp air of early autumn. Behind us lay the town which had been our home since May, its strange, fantastic Chinese temples and maze of

jumbled dwellings just catching the early sunlight; the whole scene might have been a setting snatched from the banks of the Jordan in the far away Holy Land. As we rode out of the gate and onto the old wooden bridge with its stone parapets the full strength of the Third Army Corps Military band blazed out the first notes of Sousa's "The Stars and the Stripes," and with the glorious swing of that martial strain taken up by drum and trumpet we crossed the river. None who has never lived for months in an alien land among a people of a different race can ever realize the throb of the heart that such music inspires. To us, in far off Mongolia, it sounded like a voice from our very own, coming across the wide Pacific.

When we reached the open country our old friend stopped his horse and his interpreter spake his last words to us. "You have been with us long," he told us. "With us you have lived through a terrible period. For many months our paths have lain side by side. We would not, therefore, say farewell, for the Japanese never says adieu to his friends." He had paused with the sweetest, gentlest of smiles before he uttered his last words, which the interpreter then translated to us. "I will sit here upon my horse, with my staff gathered about me. When you reach the bend in the road you will turn in your saddles and wave your hand at me and I will wave my

hand to you and that, my friends, shall be our last good-by."

Silently we wrung their hands, these hard-visaged friends on whom a cruel war had left its scars in gray hairs and furrowed faces, and rode on our way. Half a mile beyond the ancient Mongol highway turned a bluff, and wound up toward the Pass in the Hills. When we reached the bend we turned in our saddles. There below us on the outskirts of the town we could see the general, motionless in the flooding sunlight, with the little group of the staff crowded in the background. As we turned in our saddles we could barely discern the flutter of a handkerchief from the stern old figure on the black horse. Once again the faint strains of martial music drifted to us on the still morning air; we waved our hands and turned once more on our way. Who shall say that we were oversentimental if there was a little mist in our eyes as we looked our last upon the men and on the army, whose lives and ours had been so closely linked?

Forty miles we rode that day over dusty highways that wound their way through waving fields of the whispering kowliang (or millet) that bent and swayed in the breeze. A few hours' sleep at Tieling in a deserted shell-torn Russian house, then a five hours' pounding over rough rails in a box car and we were back once more at the Grand Headquarters of the army at Moukden.

Here we paid our final respects to the officers of the staff whom we had known off and on for nearly two years. A few hours passed, and again we were on the train. This time it is a ten hour stretch in a third class car to Newchwang, the end of the neutral and uncensored cable.

In the early hours of the morning, with typewriter on my army trunk, half a column cable was pounded out, and that afternoon the Chicago *News* printed the first cable from the field of what the army thought of peace. A day's delay in Newchwang to sell my horse, then two nights on a B. & S. freight steamer to Chefoo, and thence by boat and rail two days more to Peking, and a white man's hotel. No one who has not lived in a Chinese village, surrounded by the filth and vermin of a Manchu compound, during the rainy season, with water trickling through the roof on the inside and mud two feet deep without, can quite realize what a bed, a bath, clean clothes and good "chow" means. Two hours after arriving, a blue-clad Chinese boy handed in a cable from Chicago. It ran: "Await further instructions, Peking."

For the first time in nearly two years, the editor in his office ten thousand miles away had no immediate plan of action on his mind. For the moment the world was quiet, and a brief respite from the constant call for "stories" granted to the correspondent.

War work for the reading public falls naturally

into two distinct classes, as different as prose and poetry in literature. Editors call the exponents of these divisions "feature men" and "events" or "cable men." The former are the literary artists who write atmosphere and artistic impressions for the monthly and weekly papers of the world. At enormous salaries, and with the retinue and camp equipage of a commanding general, they drift leisurely along with the army. When the battles are over, they chronicle their impressions and send them by mail to their home offices. They are accompanied by trained artists of the camera, to illustrate their stories, and what is still lacking is filled in by some artist of repute at home. Their names appear in large letters on the covers of the magazines to which they contribute, and to the world are they known far and wide. The other type, the "cable men," are collectors of what might be called "spot" news. From them not atmosphere or color is demanded, but "accuracy of fact" and "quick delivery" is the essence of their work. Known professionally wherever big papers are printed, the cable man is almost unknown to the general public. His paper requires of him first to be on the spot where news is being made, and second to get a clear, concise and correct report of that news to an uncensored cable, and do it before anyone else can. Waking or sleeping, the events man has two ideas in the back of his head, the hour his paper goes to press, and his line of communication to his ca-

ble office. As a diver depends on his air tube to the face of the water, so the correspondent depends on his line of communication to the outer world. The moment his retreat is severed he is useless and for the moment might as well be dead. He may have a story of world importance, but if he is out of touch with the cable his news is worthless. His paper, on the other hand, is prepared to back him to the limit to maintain such a line. Steamers, railroad trains, courier systems, and any means or methods his imagination or ingenuity may devise, are his for the asking, if he can only get out exclusive news, and get it first. His paper will pay fabulous sums, $2,000, $5,000, even $10,000 for an account of a world event. A single story of this kind is printed in ten thousand papers in fifty different languages within twenty-four hours after the correspondent files it in a cable office. His version of the affair is read first by every foreign office in the civilized world. On his story the editorials on the "situation" are based, from London to Buenos Ayres. The "feature man" chronicles the events as he sees them. The "cable man," though in a small way, is a part of the great event. In the boiling vortex where history is in the making, there is he, struggling against his colleagues of the press of America and Europe to give to the world the first facts of an international clash. He moves to the click of the telegraph, and if he acts at all, he must act on the

minute. Even hours are too slow for the newspaper reading public. His editor at home watches the ever-changing kaleidoscope of history, moving and reforming on the stages of the world. Now Japan is in the public's eye. He has a man on the spot. Again it is a race war in Georgia—the invasion of Thibet, a constitutional parliament in Persia, war in the Balkans, or a revolution in Russia. All of these the restless, lynx-eyed one watches from his office in Chicago. A hundred cables a day reach his desk from all quarters of the globe, and in his mind from hour to hour he is weighing the relative importance of all the interesting situations in the world. If a parliamentary crisis develops in Europe, he has the choice of a dozen of his foreign staff to cover it. A few words on the pad, and in five hours the Berlin correspondent starts for Sweden, or perhaps the Paris man telephones his wife that he is off for Algeciras or Madrid. A pause in the career of a war correspondent for such a paper means to him that for the moment the situation is too indefinite to warrant any immediate action. From day to day he lives with a vague wonder on his mind where the next day will see him. Will he be on his way home, to Europe, Asia, or the Philippines, or perhaps to some unfamiliar place he has to search in the Atlas to find? Surrounded by his campaign baggage and war kit, he sits and waits, ready for a quick call to any quarter of the globe to which the cable may order him.

Peking is too far from the haunts of civilization for one to follow the news of the world day by day. The telegrams are days old, and the papers weeks and months. For over a month the correspondent waited in Peking and played. China is ever the source of interest which ebbs and flows. Now it is on the point of another Boxer outbreak, and next it is in the throes of constitutional reforms. An occasional anti-foreign riot, a Chinese execution, or perhaps even a bomb helps to while away the lazy days, and gives material for intermittent cables on the trend of far eastern politics.

We were waiting on the veranda of the hotel across from the American Legation. At this moment we seem as far from Chicago as from Mars. The sounds and sights of Peking have weaned us from the confusion of a world beyond. Rickshaw coolies squatting outside, the low murmur of their voices, the jingle of a bell on a passing Peking cart, all tend to widen the gulf that separates the East from the West. We are aroused by a voice at our side. "Telegram have got." It is for me. I take the sheet of paper that in some form or other has found out my quiet in every quarter of the globe. As you tear open the gray envelope you wonder almost subconsciously where the next weeks will take you, and your curiosity hurries your hand as you tear it open and read the curt message dated Chicago, and marked "Rush."

"Russia direct. When do you start?" Once more the love and fascination of the game surge

through your veins. You are too far out of the world to know what is passing for the moment in Russia, but you feel sure it must be something good and big, with promise of long duration, to have brought this urgent cable of five words, ordering you half around the world. You call for a telegraph blank, and as you wait, your mind works almost unconsciously, something unexpressed and involuntary. "Russia direct! The Trans-Siberian road is unquestionably the quickest, providing you can get immediate action, but it is now blocked with troops and munitions of war. Obviously a permit will be necessary. It would take ten days at least to make connections through the State Department and the Petersburg Minister of Railroads to get it. Ten days is too long to wait, and then there are the uncertainties of days besides. The *Pacific* might do, but the *Empress* sails from Shanghai to-morrow. You can't make her, and there is not another fast boat for a fortnight. There is a French or German mail for the Canal surely within a week," and your mind is made up, and on the arm of your chair you write the reply, "Leaving to-night. Shanghai Monday, thence first steamer Canal," and sign your name, mark the message "R. T. P.," which means "Receiver to pay," and walk to your room. Your Japanese understudy who has been on your staff these many months jumps up. Another man who has been waiting in the corner of the room gets out of his chair. He is an Ameri-

can negro, Monroe D. Morris, who for three weeks has been an anxious candidate for a staff position. Since it is Russia, the Jap is obviously impossible. You tell him so, and he shuffles his feet as he hears the ultimatum, for he had hoped for a trip to Europe. But one man's meat is another man's poison, for while the mournful Ikezwap backed up for the last time, the beaming Ethiopian grinned from ear to ear as he rushed to his quarters to throw together his own small belongings.

A few hours sufficed to pack all my effects which, when mobilized, comprised fourteen pieces of impedimenta. The theory is that a war correspondent must move from place to place prepared at any moment to adjust himself to any situation, from a war assignment, revolution or riot, down to the meeting socially of a foreign ambassador. Hence these fourteen pieces, which sound excessive, contained everything from a frock coat and a high hat down to a kitchen camp stove. Saddles, tents, campaign outfits of various kinds take up much room, but are really worth the bother, for when one wants them, that want is a demand that money often cannot meet. One's own saddle on a hurry call that may mean days of riding is in itself an asset beyond comparison. It may mean all the difference between success and failure. One knows just what one can do with an outfit tried and true, and hence it is worth while lugging it about the world, even if it is used but once or twice.

A few days later saw me and my grinning Ethiopian disembarked on the Bund at Shanghai. The place looked familiar enough, for I had spent weeks there, and this was my fifth visit. Every time I left I felt that I had made a distinct addition to my information as to the wickedness of the world, and every time the desire rested heavily on my mind to write a story about this cosmopolitan mushroom on the China coast, but each time I held my hand as I realized that fate might well bring me back to it, but now that Shanghai is some ten thousand miles away, and the chances of seeing the people who might read such a story remote, I feel that I cannot pass it over without a few comments.

Geographically, the Chinese city is almost at the end of the earth. Morally, one could say, without any hesitation, it is at the end. The only place that can compete with it for demoralization and unrestriction is Port Said. The two are neck and neck for laurels of this description. Shanghai is the final bit of dead water to which the flotsam and jetsam of the stream of life seems to drift and then stop in utter stagnation. People who have failed to make good in all other quarters of the world, seem to turn naturally towards the China coast, and Shanghai lures them as the candle does the moth. There remittance men are as thick as sparrows in springtime. These creatures are the black sheep and younger sons, or other undesirable members of well-to-do families,

who are allowed so many pounds a quarter by their loving friends, on the sole condition that the cash must be paid anywhere "east of the Canal." They drift along through India, over to Burma, down the States of the Malay Peninsula, and with short stops at Singapore and Hongkong, they start straight for their final collapse in Shanghai, where they meet shoals of their fellows, consuming bad whiskey and soda at the bars of the various hotels. These gentlemen form a strong and populous element in the community. Next we find a large colony of alleged business men who have failed to accumulate the fortunes to which their alleged abilities are supposed to have entitled them, and who have come out to China to sell someone a gold brick. These two classes form the matrix of the foreign unattached residents. Then we have the men who are actually attached to some business house with their home office in the States, or back in Europe. These are for the most part doing short sentences, and are fairly respectable. Lastly we have the Shanghai business man, who is one of the most strenuous gentlemen of his kind to be seen the world over. He speculates in shares, of which there is an enormous variety in Shanghai. The operations in the Chicago wheat pit and the New York stock exchange in days of a panic are mild in comparison to the fluctuations observed on any ordinary day's business in Shanghai stocks. The

result is, people are losing and winning fortunes every few hours.

At 11 o'clock everyone who has the entrée begins to drift toward the Shanghai Club. By noon the bar is packed. At 2 o'clock the rush is over, and only those that have fallen by the way remain, cast away on sofas. In race week or holidays, sofas are as few and far between as snowballs in Hades. At five o'clock the rush begins again, and lasts until the early hours of the morning.

Everybody in Shanghai drinks, mostly to excess. It is the only place I know of where young men with incomes of from $50 to $100 a month are able to spend twice that sum in a week on their establishment, yet this is unquestionably the case. I knew of one young man making perhaps $20 a week, who in a year failed for $10,000. At no time, as far as I could ever learn, did he ever have any assets worth mentioning. This remarkable means of living is fostered by the so-called "chit" system. The "chits" are small bits of paper on which one writes an I O U for any commodity or service conceivable. Any man who has a position can sign a chit at almost any bar, store or dive in Shanghai. The young men of the clerk class proceed to do this with great effect, and ready cash is used for speculative purposes, while their immediate wants are met by the simple process of signing a "chit." If they are successful in their speculation, they pay the "chits," and

all goes well. If they fail, and are unable to beg, borrow or steal means to meet their obligations, they either commit suicide or go to Chefoo or Tientsin until the trouble blows over, which it soon does, as there are so many other men in the same boat. After a few months of this precarious life about the China coast, back they come, and if they are unable to get employment, they fall back into a semi-loafing class and ultimately a vagrant class, which helps to swell the already large population of this sort. The wealthy men of the place are mostly young fellows of the kind described, who have prospered in their investments. They go in more heavily for all sorts of deals and speculations. Chinese concessions, promotion schemes and similar enterprises are created, to be sold at home with great advantage. Every week fortunes are made and lost, and everybody, nearly, is happy and irresponsible.

The methods of doing business are quaint, and to the westerner somewhat astonishing. Every man who is connected, in even the most remote way, with a business deal, comes in for a squeeze of some sort. I knew of a case where one man had a boat to sell, and another man, who had learned the description of the boat (for the names of the gentlemen are withheld by the middle man lest the latter be cut out entirely) was eager to snap it up for use in running the blockade. Both the buyer and the seller were eager to meet each other, but the only man who knew them both de-

clined to disclose their names until he was paid a commission sum of $5,000. If you meet a man, and he introduces you to another man, who makes you acquainted with a third party who sells you a commodity, numbers one and two block all negotiations until the seller consents to share the spoils with them. The result is that after a business deal has gone through so many hands, there is not much left for anyone in particular. The tendency is for the man who has the commodity and the man who has the price to combine, and exclude the line of grafters who would stand between, hence the gentlemen who profit on the legitimate business men veil all their negotiations until almost the last moment in a business deal. The names of the actual parties are withheld from each other by the "go betweens" for fear that the gentlemen will combine and exclude them from profit.

A volume might easily be written in description of the various habits of the men, women and children who lead the fierce pace of foreign life in Shanghai, but the requirements of space demand that I pass over such a tempting analysis of degeneracy and vice with these few comments.

CHAPTER II

The Race for the Situation—Ceylon—Across India—Stalled in Bombay—Russia via the Suez Canal

After four days of Shanghai, the German Mail Steamer *Princess Alice*, with passengers, mail and cargo, from Yokohama to Bremen, called at Woo Sung and put an end to our sufferings. In a driving snow and sleet storm we boarded the big German liner as she lay at anchor at the mouth of the Yangtse River, and had our baggage ticketed to the Suez Canal. It was during the next weeks, while we are plowing through the China Seas, that I began to learn more of the checkered history of my Chief of Staff. A more or less entertaining volume might be readily written on his wanderings and experiences. For hours on end, while I lay in my bunk kicking my heels and waiting for the time to pass, Monroe D. would sit on a camp stool and regale me with the story of his life. Scientists tell us that there is no such thing as perpetual motion, but when they made this statement, they had never seen my "Black Prince," and observed the phenomena of unintermittent speech which flowed steadily and at the rate of 150 words a minute for as many minutes on end

FROM FAR MONGOLIA'S BORDER FOR 180 MILES EASTWARD
STRETCHES THE LINE OF THE JAPANESE TRENCHES

REGIMENT AFTER REGIMENT, FRESH FROM JAPAN, POUR ALONG
THE NEWLY MADE HIGHWAYS

Wau

as he was able to get a hearer. He was born in Mississippi, and had moved early to Kansas, where in 1898, as he informed me, he was holding an important position in a local express company. When the call to arms for the Spanish War went forth, Morris was the first man to enlist in the 20th Kansas. For active service in Cuba he was mustered out a year later as Third Sergeant, and immediately re-enlisted in a colored volunteer regiment for a campaign in the Philippines, and quickly rose to the rank of First Sergeant in his company. After serving out his time, he returned to the States, again renewed his associations with the express business, and gave that up to accept the position of porter on a Pullman car. This business, however, did not apparently prove sufficient for the development of his intellectual assets, and he soon gave that up to go as steward for one of the American army transports. Thirteen times he had crossed the Pacific, and finally had left the transport at Tientsin and attached himself to one of the officers in the United States Marine Barracks at Peking.

My arrival and departure had opened a new career to him, and from the day we left Peking until his return to Kansas City, both night and day were devoted to disproving the scientific phenomena referred to above.

"Morris," I would say, when I felt particularly bored, "please talk to me."

"Yes, sir," he would say, and he would begin on

the moment and continue for hours until I would say:

"All right, Morris. Can do. Go to bed," when he would cut it off in the middle of a sentence with a "Yes, sir. Good Night, sir!" and be off.

The trip from Japan to the Canal is interesting enough the first time, but thereafter it becomes a bit monotonous. Hongkong, Singapore, Penang and the ports were all old stories to me. The *Princess Alice* sighted the palm-skirted coast of Ceylon twenty-two days later. I was desperately bored with the German boat. I was bound for Russia. Everybody went by the Canal. I had been that way myself less than a year before. I had a new idea.

"Morris," I said, as we slipped behind the breakwater at Colombo one glorious November afternoon, "I have a scheme. Pack up chop-chop. We are going to abandon this boat to-day. From Colombo we will cross over to India, take the train to Bombay, go up the Persian Gulf to Bunder Abbas, or one of those places, get some horses, camels, or whatever they use there, and cross Persia to Teheran. From there we can hit the Caucasus from the Caspian Sea."

Morris was delighted and turned on the conversation and began packing on the spot. He was filled with delight at the idea of an 800-mile ride across the mountains of Persia.

"It may be bad there," I told him. "They say

the mountains are filled with bandits." I paused to watch the effect, and then asked Morris, "Are you a good shot?" He stopped packing, and his eyes snapped as he drew himself up with pride and said:

"You just give me a 'Martini' or a 'Kraig,' and I can wing a man at 200 yards just as fast as they can get up," and he grinned from ear to ear.

An hour later we landed in Ceylon.

There are many beautiful places in the world, and there are a great many places that are strange and quaint to the foreigner who sees them for the first time, but the beautiful island that has Colombo for its capital has the rest of the spots in the position of feeble competitors, at least, that was the way it looked to me. Apparently Ceylon has long been ranked as A-1 on its personal charm, for even the person who wrote that old familiar hymn, which treats briefly of various places, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains to India's Coral Strands," gave the palm to Ceylon, where even he admitted "Every prospect pleases and only man is vile." That is Ceylon all right as far as the pleasing prospect is concerned, but the citizens of the place impressed me in a very hospitable and kindly light, despite the disparaging comment of the hymn writer. It is true that they are somewhat active in the pursuit of business, and are chronic beggars, but otherwise it is hard to see how they are any worse than anybody else. However, they may have changed since his

day. The harbor of Colombo isn't a very good harbor, and were it not for the protection of the breakwater, it would be absolutely untenable in the spring and summer, when the hot monsoon blows up from the sun-scorched African coast, and piles up the great breakers in clouds of foam and spray against the stone masonry. This breakwater is thrown across the harbor neck to guard the ships at anchor from the stormy seas that lash without. The harbor itself is so small that the ships scarcely have room to swing at anchor with the changing of the tide, so that they are tied up by their noses and sterns, or, to be more nautical, fore and aft, to great buoys, which keep them absolutely steady. The moment one lands on the jetty, one is besieged by droves of extremely black gentlemen, dressed in a white effect, which seems to be a cross between a pair of pajamas and a nightgown. Everyone of these gentlemen endeavors to get your ear, and to tell you in most deplorable English that he recognizes in you a man of exceptionally genial qualities, to whom he would like to attach himself during your stay. If left unmolested, he will hustle you into a carriage and take you off to see the town, irrespective of your baggage or other impending business. If you evade him on the moment of landing, and fight your way through the streets, you will meet dozens more of the same pattern. Your first impression is one of pleasure to think that you have found so many new friends, for everyone you meet

has to be restrained from embracing you on the spot, and wants to do something for you—remuneration to be discussed later. Incidentally everybody expects something. It seems that all the native inhabitants of this place have an idea that the foreigner is perpetually in their debt for something or other. If you look at a man hard on the street, he at once stops, steps forward with a winning smile and outstretched hand, seemingly under the impression that you owe him at least 50 annas for the privilege of seeing him. At the hotels it is even worse. You get nothing free, not even a pleasant look. In fact, one gets into the habit of distinctly discouraging pleasant looks, for, though they are pretty to look at, they come high, averaging about a rupee per look. The men are extremely black, with wonderfully perfect features, and for the most part superbly handsome. There seems to have been some mistake, however, in the women, for they absolutely fail to make good when it comes to personal charms. Most of them one sees are extremely depressing spectacles, and the few that are at all presentable have been corralled by enterprising speculators, and are on exhibition, but, like everything else in Ceylon, they are not free—one has to pay to look at them.

The natural beauties of Ceylon and Colombo are beyond description. It is almost the only place in the world, save perhaps Japan and Venice, that is just as good as advertised. The won-

derful groves of cocoanut palms, banana trees, and I know not what other tropical wonders in every direction, are outlined against the soft blue of the eastern sky. All along the sea-front of Colombo the palms stretch in great avenues and groves from the Galle-Face Hotel to Mount Lavinia, a bluff by the sea, some four or five miles down the coast. If it is beautiful at the seashore, it is even more wonderful in the interior, where luxuriant tropic hills rise sharply above jungle-clad valleys, and tea plantations abound. In the interior one finds wild elephants in great droves, and the catching and taming of these for domestic use is not one of the least important occupations on the island. Other places in the tropics are so fiercely hot that one fails to appreciate the glories that are on every hand, but here the breezes from the sea, that spring up at night, cool the air so that one can enjoy the advantages of the tropics, and yet sleep as comfortably as in a more northern climate. One might spend weeks in this glorious country, but as has been the case on my previous visits, I was pressed for time. A little wretched B. I. boat was just starting for the tip of India, and we transferred to her.

The reader in search of accuracy and facts may as well know at the start that the writer passed but five days in the Indian Empire, and, therefore, what follows is not to be regarded as an authoritative discussion of conditions there. My impressions began on first boarding the steamer at Co-

lombo for the nearest Indian port, which rejoices in the name of Teutocorin. Behind a table on the deck of the steamer sat a large and forbidding party in a brilliant uniform, before whom I was dragged by the first deck-hand who discovered me wandering about the boat with the Black Prince at my heels, trying to find an unoccupied cabin in which to deposit my impedimenta. The man in uniform, it appeared, was an officer of the Indian customs, and he at once pointed out his importance in the social scheme, and, standing me up before him like a prisoner at the bar, started on an intimate investigation of my personal history. Large pads of paper in forms of printed matter were piled about, and while he was busy asking questions, you are equally busy signing papers to the effect that you are not a pirate, and not afflicted with the plague, and so forth and so on. At last the supreme moment arrives. Backed by all the majesty of the law and the dignity of his brilliant uniform, he asks you in an impressive whisper if you have any fire-arms. Here was where he landed heavily on my expedition. I did have fire-arms of all kinds and varieties. For a moment it looked as though I was in for a life sentence. Even Morris turned pale in the confusion which followed. The theory seems to be that every foreigner who happens to have a revolver or shotgun in his baggage is the fore-runner of a revolutionary junta, and is about to inaugurate a second Indian Mutiny, or something of that

sort. After the first outburst of excitement, and things had calmed down a little, and the gentleman in uniform talked slow enough, so that I could understand, I discovered that all might yet be well, providing I paid the price. I never understood exactly what it was for, but my impression was that it was something in the nature of a customs duty. By tending strictly to business and writing fast, the necessary forms were finally filled out, and, weak and exhausted, I was allowed to withdraw to recuperate in my cabin.

The next disappointment occurred in the morning, when I found that the boat which starts for Teutocorin does not really get there at all, but anchors miles away on the horizon, while the despairing passengers are taken into the alleged port on a small smelly tender, where they sit in determined rows, trying to keep the spray off with their umbrellas. At the pier which is finally reached, a swarm of piratical coolies and customs officials rush down like an avalanche upon the baggage and carry it off to the station a quarter of a mile away, where the train for the north is waiting. The Indian trains really are not as bad as one would expect, considering the condition of the country and the people. There are no sleeping cars, as the term is used in America. They have something, however, under that name, which is a compartment on wheels, with two sofas, that remind one of slabs in a morgue running lengthwise. At night another slab unexpectedly lets

down from the roof. This is technically known as the upper berth. The whole is called a sleeping car because if one remains in it long enough, one finally falls asleep from sheer exhaustion. The wise traveler brings a pillow and some bedding. The unwise sleeps in his overcoat. The railroad provides nothing whatever except jolts and some dismal looking railroad men, who appear to be chronic recipients of bad news from home.

The country from Teutocorin to Madras is not particularly noteworthy, and looks like any other semi-tropic country, with much cactus growth scattered about. New Mexico and Oklahoma are the nearest things in America which resemble it. The only new thing that really impresses the stranger is the native, and for a short time he is interesting to look at. His dress is distinctly simple. As far as one can observe, there is nothing more than a long strip of red cotton cloth, perhaps four feet wide by twenty feet long. He begins his dressing process at his head and winds himself up in this sheet effect, until when the job is finished, he appears extremely well dressed and quite gracefully draped. The women have a similar arrangement, only there is more of it. The country in the south is fairly well cultivated, and here and there in the fields one sees the natives stripped for action, patiently following the bullock and a wooden plow through the field. The thing that impresses one most of all is the limitless number of brown-faced red clad men and women

that swarm around the stations and villages with apparently nothing on their minds or any business in hand. There are no dining cars on the train that I traveled on, and one has to put up with eating houses, one of which occurs every five hours. The fare is not bad, and the time allowed is certainly adequate to eat all there is in sight. The style of drink in this country is whiskey and soda with ice, served in glasses eight inches deep. There must be something curious about Indian conditions which enable the residents to soak up such enormous quantities of alcohol. There are thousands of them in India who can drink a quart of whiskey a day and get up and walk off with it without turning a hair.

Madras is the first truly large city on our line, and is called the third largest in India. I have met people since I was there who assert strongly that Madras has attractions. Personally I was unable to find them in my sojourn of a single day. Nobody seems to know anything or to be interested in anything, and it seems to offend a man frightfully if you want to do business with him. Everybody I met was unutterably bored. Statistics say that there is much business done in Madras, and the figures seem to prove it, but when or how it is done is a mystery to the writer, who was unable to detect a single individual doing anything useful or interesting. The hotels apparently are run in the interest of the servants. There are literally millions of them, everyone

doing something different. They are strong advocates of the minute division of labor. The halls and corridors of the hotels swarm with them, and the compound and dining rooms are crowded with them, standing about, getting under foot, and annoying one. At every turn there is a black man handing you something you don't want, calling for a carriage when you prefer walking, getting you coffee and cigars when you told him distinctly three times that you don't want anything. When you come to go away, they appear en masse in front of your room. It is a literal fact that just before my departure from one of these hotels I went to my room to look for a book. The corridor in front of it was crowded with men, so that I thought there must be either a fire or a raid by the police. Not at all! It was only the local staff waiting for tips. When you get in your carriage to go away there is a course of wails,—

"I am the man who blacked your boots!"

"I passed the sahib his paper at breakfast."

"I carried water for his bath," and so forth, until you are on the verge of nervous prostration listening to the uproar. The old travelers in India aren't bothered so much, for they slap a few people, kick the porters, and insult the proprietor of the hotel, and by so doing prosper.

From Madras to Bombay is something over a thousand miles, which an express train makes in about thirty-six hours. The trains on this line are more comfortable than in the south of India.

The gauge is wider, being five feet, six inches, which makes very smooth riding. The railroad bed itself is admirable, being well ballasted and with heavy steel, and the bridges throughout are the latest steel and masonry construction. Bombay, which was our destination, is the second largest city in India. Calcutta is the biggest and most filthy. Bombay is really a beautiful place, but was hot and sticky, and when we were there, steaming like a Turkish bath. The streets are broad and well kept, the buildings many stories and modern, while the general plan of the town affords many parks, squares and driveways. The people over there seem to be doing more business than in Madras, but even in Bombay it is very difficult to actually discover anyone in the act of doing anything in particular. After he has once gotten used to it, they say the foreigner gets to thinking there is no place like it, and though he may make an occasional break for home, in nine cases out of ten he comes back to the luxurious life and tropical heat of India.

Owing to mis-information, which was pleasantly given me by one of Cook's officials, we missed the boat up the Persian Gulf by two hours. My personal experience with Cook's representatives in the far east was that what they don't know about the country in which they are stationed would fill a series of large volumes. There was not another boat for five days, so, cursing our luck and the genial young man, who had so glibly misdirected us, we took our baggage up to the Taji-Mahal

Hotel, which is certainly one of the finest in the world. The Bombay papers were filled with telegrams of the situation in Russia. Inasmuch as I was stalled for a number of days, I sent my office a brief wire to keep them posted of my address in case a change of plan might seem advisable, and then settled down for my week's wait. I was aroused the next morning about 5 o'clock by a yellow envelope shoved under the mosquito-bar of my bed by a docile Indian servant,—the never-to-be-avoided cable again. "Situation urgent," it read. "Proceed quickest possible route Russia." That settled it. I shouted for Morris, and by noon was steaming out of Bombay Harbor on a P. & O. liner headed not for the Persian Gulf, but for the Suez Canal. At Aden the Reuters dispatches that the agent brought on board told of the confusion and disaster in Russia. "Wires cut. Railroads in the hands of strikers and mutiny of sailors at Sebastopol," ran the headings. I gave the steamship agent, who brought them on, a cable for my office in Chicago. "Port Said in three days. Wire more funds." I had a few thousand in my money belt, but "Railroads and wires cut" suggested the need of money and lots of it to keep the pot boiling.

At Port Said the Imperial Ottoman Bank paid me a substantial remittance one hour after I landed. In the meantime Morris had gotten into a fight with one of those dirty heathen negroes who infest the Canal zone. It was a detail, however, at least for Morris, and in two hours we

were on an express train speeding for Cairo. A night at Shepherd's and then an express train for Alexandria, where I caught by minutes a dilapidated old barge called the *Ismalia* for Constantinople. My plan was Constantinople and then by boat to Odessa, and thence where the news was originating.

The *Ismalia* was the limit. She called everywhere there was a landing place. Her chow was vile, and the company worse, and every place we stopped the cable dispatches told of renewed disorders in Russia and the Balkans. Every hour that we lay killing time in the dirty ports at which we called I begrudged most bitterly.

The Piræus and Smyrna slipped past. At Mitylene the Powers were playing a puerile game on the Sultan, or, as the papers said, "Conducting naval demonstrations against the Porte." The wily old monarch having been there many times before, no doubt recognized in it one of those oft repeated and inefficient bluffs which so delight the heart of the European diplomats. Anyway, he stood pat, and after the Powers had had their play and saw that there was nothing doing, they pulled up their anchors and sailed away, while the Turks smiled broadly. At dawn of the fifth day from Egypt we passed the Dardanelles, crossed the Sea of Marmora, and at six in the evening dropped anchor a mile outside the Golden Horn. Constantinople at last, and the threshold of our situation!

CHAPTER III

Constantinople at last!—The Threshold of the Russian Assignment—A Nation in Convulsion

I always supposed that the Japanese were the most suspicious people in the world until I went to Russia, where I discovered a brand of officials that was so much worse than the Japanese that there was no comparison. In fact, for years I had them marked in my mind as the criterion for entertaining doubts as to other people's business, but the Turks can give the Russians cards and spades when it comes to having an evil mind for the intents of all strangers. As far as I can make out, every officer in Turkey, from the general down to the policemen, is firmly convinced that every foreigner who comes to their dismal country does so with the intention of "stalking" the Sultan, bombing the Premier, or starting a revolution. The unfortunate monarch is no doubt the ring-leader in this quaint idea. Anyway, he sits inside a fortified palace, surrounded by troops, and chatters his teeth from sunrise to sunset. The days he comes out of his hole, the reserve is called out and the foreigners have to have permits from the embassies to stand on a hill and watch him through a telescope as he scuttles from his

palace to his carriage. Nobody can get into Turkey without a pass-port, nor can he get out of it without having it elaborately viséd.

The *Ismalia* anchored at sundown, but as it was two minutes after six, there was nothing doing! Allow us to land that night! The police who had boarded us to watch for a conspiracy before morning shivered at the idea, and at once viewed us as dangerous and suspicious characters, therefore it was nearly eight in the morning when, the sun being fairly under way, we pulled up our anchor and started for the mouth of the Bosphorus.

Constantinople is really three cities in one, and is perhaps the only town in the world that has the distinction of being in two continents. The whole is situated at the junction of the Sea of Marmora and the Bosphorus, that narrow defile which leads into the Black Sea. The three cities are separated the one from the other by arms of the sea. In Europe are Stamboul and Pera Galata, divided by the inlet of the Golden Horn, a half mile wide, where it joins the Bosphorus and gradually narrowing as it curves upward towards the Sweet Waters, some six miles distant. On the eastern side of the Strait is the Asiatic town, Scutari. One may travel well the regions of the world and find no more picturesque scene than that which greets him as he approaches the Turkish capital from the Sea of Marmora. The gorgeous architecture and rich color make a picture unique

throughout the globe. On the European side are the historic battlements of the old Byzantine city which Constantine made the capital of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, and the picturesque confusion of domes, terraced roofs and minarets of Stamboul, the cypress groves and white marble mansions of Scutari skirt the Asiatic shore as far as one can see. In the center is the mouth of the Bosphorus itself, bending toward the Euxine between rugged hills not unlike a Norwegian Fjord. The inbound steamer passing around Seraglio Point enters the Golden Horn which old Procopius described as "always calm and never crested into waves, as though a barrier were placed there to the billows, and all storms were shut out from thence through reverence for the city." Above the crowded building of old Galata are the heights of Pera, on which the new and more modern part of the town is located. Looking northward, one sees the winding course of the Bosphorus, the shores lined with palaces, villas and terraced gardens. No port in the world presents such a cosmopolitan aspect as does the Golden Horn. Old pre-historic Turkish iron-clads lie at anchor near the shore. Passenger and mail steamers from every large nation in Europe and beyond Europe swing at their moorings or lie along the quays. Wheat laden ships from Odessa and others deep with the golden harvest of the Danube country lie side by side with the graceful Greek and Turkish coasting vessels, while hundreds of tugs,

launches and ferry-boats pass to and fro in the harbor.

There are nearly a million inhabitants in Constantinople, and a more disreuptable and miscellaneous combination has never been herded together in one spot since history began. At least, that is my opinion. Moslems, Greeks, Armenians, Bulgars, and assorted Asiatics mingle with a meager handful of foreigners. The great bulk are ignorant and fanatical, easily aroused by their priests to any form of atrocity, and are generally useless. Most of the population are poor, and all are lazy. The official figures do not include the dogs, which are roughly estimated at about a million. They are a sad lot, and the most dismal creatures in the world. As far as I could make out, their diet consists of a guttural abuse and ashes. The billy-goat of the comic weekly fame, with his menu of tin cans and old rags, is an epicure compared with the Constantinople dog. The home of this animal is everywhere, and in the winter one sees fifteen and twenty sleeping, piled the one on top of another in a heap three feet deep to keep warm. The day is devoted to slumber, and the consumption of rubbish, while the night is given over exclusively to vocal activities. As soon as night comes and people are just going to sleep, the dogs wake up and in sad, disconsolate tones, sitting on their haunches, with eyes closed and noses pointed heavenwards, they proceed to unburden themselves of all their troubles. The

hours of performance are from 11 P. M. until daylight. They all suffer from the mange and acute melancholia. The guide book says that their numbers have materially diminished, but I was unable to trace any symptom of race suicide during my brief sojourn in town.

The Turkish Christians, Greeks, Armenians, and Bulgarians have nothing whatever in common. They hate one another as much as all loathe the Turks, which, it may be added, is in the superlative degree. There are a few cultivated and wealthy people of these races, but the bulk of them are as poverty stricken and illiterate as are the Moslems themselves. From eight to a dozen languages are spoken in the streets, and five or six appear in the advertisements and on the shop fronts. These races have nothing to bring them together, no relations except trade with one another. Everybody lives in perpetual horror and dread of all the other elements in the community; there is no common patriotism or civic feeling. However, as I am not writing a guide to ethnological conditions in Constantinople, I will return to my own immediate troubles, and give over the discussion of those of the people who compose the population, for my purpose is to write one book, and not a dozen.

Leaving the baggage in the hands of the faithful Morris, I hurried ashore. Rows of cadaverous and dirty officials and understrappers lined the pier. Between the wharf and the street were

innumerable badly soiled sentinels, clothed in what appeared to be second hand ready made garments. Armed with my pass-port I slipped through this phalanx, giving it out that Morris would attend to the customs and the balance of my affairs. The Turk is slow, and if you talk fast, wave your pass-port, crowd a bit and look fierce, you have him bluffed. Incidentally, this is not a bad receipt in other quarters of the globe. Anyway it worked here. Upon Morris fell the heat and burden of the day, as I learned afterwards. It would seem that there is a law against guns and big knives coming into the sacred precincts of the Golden Horn. I had moved so fast, that if anyone had asked me if I had anything, I didn't hear him. I had, of course, a modest little 38 caliber revolver stowed away unostentatiously. Morris had my big army Colt in his hip pocket, where it bulged out like a mountain gun. A dozen eagle eyes saw the bulge and a dozen voices asked if he had any fire-arms. With injured dignity Morris drew himself up and proceeded to defend himself. "Certainly not!" Why should he, a peaceful colored man, traveling with an American gentleman, carry such things? He, Morris, would have it known that he regarded such allegations as little better than an insult, and no doubt his master would take the matter up with the American Embassy. He could not tell exactly what would happen to the perpetrators of this outrage, but from past experience he had no doubt that everybody

present would be dismissed and disgraced from the Turkish service, etc., etc. Morris was never short of words, and once started he launched out and was really working himself up into a bona fide rage when one of the officers drew back his coat, exposing the committal black butt of the revolver. Not even for a moment was Morris nonplussed. "Yes! Certainly it is a revolver. Why not? No, he had not understood. Was it fire-arms they had asked about? Oh! He thought it was dynamite they were looking for, and he was sorry, but he misunderstood—there were so many people talking at once, and, besides, he was not entirely conversant with the Turkish language. He would like to speak Turkish, and thought if he remained any time he would soon pick it up. Yes, he spoke many languages already, but he knew of none which was more euphonic than that of the Moslems. But to return to the subject, why yes, certainly he had a revolver. As a matter of fact, he usually carried two. Yes! Everybody did in America. No gentleman would dress without one. "Why, my friends," he continued, "do you know that in America," and here he sat down on a trunk and started in on a story about President Roosevelt. At this point a man from the hotel, whom I had met outside, arrived to his aid, and by a judicious use of piastres, Morris and the fourteen pieces of baggage got through, though unfortunately the revolver stuck in the hands of the law and remained there, too, until I

paid $25.00 to some man who arranges those delicate matters, and got it back. Everything, I find, can be arranged in Turkey. The secret of it is to arrange first. After you have been denied anything, or held up, it takes three times as much to have things adjusted. In the first place, there is the diplomat, who enters into negotiations for remuneration; then the injured dignity involved for the change of the official heart is much more of an item to be considered. The safe rule in Turkey, if you are in a hurry, is to pass out a five piastre piece to any official who raises an outcry. If he has much gold lace, make it ten. This is enough to soothe the conscience up to Majors. No doubt Colonels and Generals get more, but they are all really very reasonable, if one is only thoughtful of them. I learned all these things later. After I had gotten rooms and had a bath at the hotel, I went down to the office, where a superb creature in gorgeous uniform, with a sword and two revolvers, was talking with Morris. In the center of the hall were my fourteen much-labeled pieces of baggage. As I came down Morris came to attention, saluted with great respect, and then asked for a few words. When we were alone he grinned, winked, and remarked:

"No, he ain't no general. His name is Leo, and he is the head guy here. I got the tip from the runner who got our baggage through. He don't run the hotel, but he is the works all right! I was just giving him a 'stall' on the situation.

He thinks we are 'it.' In another interview the hotel will be ours," and he rubbed his hands, grinned and clicked his heels.

Morris as a "staller" was certainly a daisy. By a "stall" he referred to a knack he had of creating an impression within an hour that we were entitled to everything within reach the moment we landed. He was never ostentatious, usually truthful. If we entered a train where there were no places left, Morris would be off to see the station master, conductor, anyone, in fact, who was handy. In a moment he would have the station aroused and come back with half a dozen officers at his heels, saluting and bowing, and in a few minutes some unfortunate would be turned out, and I would have the best place on the train. If we boarded a steamer, Morris would be busy for an hour and everything on the boat was at my disposal, while even the Captain would stop and inquire, with the utmost solicitude, as to the state of my health. I first observed this interesting course of procedure applied on the P. & O. *Egypt* on the way from Bombay to the Suez Canal. The rates from India to the Canal are something exorbitant. I found that to take Morris second cabin would cost me the equivalent of a first cabin trip on an Atlantic greyhound. The only accommodations below the second were called "native passage" and was intended for East Indians, who are quite contented to sleep on the deck and eat slops and rice. I regretted the extor-

tionate sum demanded for the second cabin, but did not want to see my chief of staff in such a wretched plight, so told him I would stand for the second cabin ticket. He had heard my negotiations with the agent, and insisted on the deck passage.

"Just you watch me, sir," he confided, when I closed the deal. "Give me a few pounds and watch Monroe D. Morris make a great 'stall.' So I gave him two pounds and I went aboard. He objected a little at being fumigated by the health authorities, but it lasted only a few minutes, and he swallowed his pride. No sooner were we under way than he directed his attention to the second steward, who had charge of the second class passengers. In great confidence he unfolded to this haughty dignitary, from whom I had been unable to get a pleasant look, that he, Morris, wasn't really a valet or servant at all, but my private secretary. That he was making a secret and most exhaustive study of the native races of the east, and that he, Morris, had taken a third class ticket that he might mingle with the lowly steerage, gain their confidence and draw them out on the ideas current in the lower walks of Indian life. Yes, he had done this all over the world, and had had great success in passing himself off as a lowly fellow. The first steward might not believe it, but it was true. Of course, if he had a second cabin passage, his fellow deck passengers would view him as an intruder.

Then followed a brief sketch of his career, altered and amended to suit the case in hand. Little by little the stony steward thawed, and at just the psychological moment, Morris slipped two golden sovereigns into his lordship's hands and begged that his true character might be concealed, and that the steward would see to it that while openly he was allotted to the deck passage, that privately he should receive accommodations suited to his true position in life. He further intimated that such a co-operation on the steward's part would not pass unnoticed, and even hinted that perhaps his chief (meaning me) might be as much impressed with the character and intelligence of the steward as was Morris himself, in which case it was more than probable that the steward might be appointed to the staff of his master's new yacht, which was now building in America. Yes, this would be an exceptionally fine position, and he, Morris, felt that of all the candidates who were eager for this position, that there was none so suitable as the steward himself. To make a long story short, by night he had the best cabin in the second class, while his friend, the steward, detailed a special man to attend to his wants at a private table. By the time we reached Aden the entire staff of the boat were greeting him deferentially as "Mr. Morris" and urging his intercession on their behalf for positions of all sorts on the new yacht. When we finally embarked at the Canal, half the crew were at the gang-way to

shake hands and give a cheer for my "Black Prince." As an accessory to one's credit Morris was certainly worth his weight in gold bullion.

After I had listened to his account of Leo I told him to get the interpreter of the hotel and go out and find the first boat sailing for Odessa. Also to look up the latest arrivals from there, and see what the captain and crew had to relate on the situation in Russia. In the meantime I made the usual rounds where one is apt to pick up information,—the American and other legations and consulates. I did not get beyond the first, however. Mr. Leishman, to whom I presented my letters of introduction from the state department, shook his head.

"My boy," he said, "I am sorry to disappoint you, but I really can't advise your going to Russia just now. Honestly, I don't think it is safe."

This was rather amusing, and I told him I was obliged to go, whatever the situation might be. He smiled and said that he "guessed not. The boats had stopped, the trains weren't operating and the cables were cut." For half an hour we chatted, and he told me all that he knew about affairs Russian, and then very kindly gave me letters to the various members of the diplomatic and consular service whom he thought could help me.

In a few hours I found that nobody in Constantinople knew anything definitely. This, however, as I soon learned, was the chronic state of affairs in the Turkish capital. The papers are so vigor-

ously censored that nothing of local importance ever by any chance filters through. The natives themselves know nothing about outside politics, and care less, while the foreign residents must rely for all their news on the papers that come from the outside. Books pertaining to Levantine politics or history are almost as hard to get over the frontier as are fire-arms, but even here in suppressed Turkey rumors of everything were rife. From the talk, I was more than ever convinced that Russia was the place for me, and at once. For two weeks refugees had been pouring in from Odessa and Crimea and the Caucasus. The Russian consul-general thought at least 50,000 people had left Odessa. Conditions in the agrarian districts, it was reported, were at a crisis. There had been a fearful spasm at Moscow, a free-for-all fight in the streets, and anywhere from five to twenty-five thousand people were said to be killed, the reports differing according to the ideas of the narrator as to the number of dead required to make a good story. The fleet in Sebastopol had mutinied and there had been a fight, and the town, so it was said, had been bombarded and destroyed, and heaven only knew how many people were killed. As to the Caucasus, well, no one could ever guess at the dreadful state of affairs there. As a matter of fact, no one knew anything. Everyone suspected everything. The last steamer from Odessa had come in ten days before, and the captain painted a lurid picture of what he expected

to happen. No, he was jolly well sure he wasn't going back to Odessa. Any man who went there was an ass. He thought that by this time the place was in ashes and every ship in the harbor burned, and those of the foreigners who were still alive weren't worth reckoning. Being the last one in, he had the field all to himself, and his story had grown more lurid day by day, so I took little stock in his report. In a word, Constantinople was stiff with the most promising rumors that ever gladdened the ear of a war correspondent.

At two o'clock that afternoon I returned to the Pera Palace Hotel and went to my room, where I found Morris disconsolately gazing out over the terraced expanse of the Bosphorus.

"Well," I said, "what do you know?"

"Nothing doing," he replied, and then told of his trip up and down the water front and his talk with various captains. He was heart-broken at the discovery that steamers were no longer running to Odessa, or any other point of interest.

"Why, sir," he said, "I regard this, sir, as one of the most promising situations in the world, sir, for people in our line of business, sir. Here is Russia all going to the devil, sir. Odessa, sir, is, no doubt, razed to the ground. Yes, sir, I believe it, reduced to ashes. Why, a day in Odessa, and what a story. I repeat, sir, what a story! And what is our position? Not a boat going there, not a train to Russia, not a cable available. I am discouraged, sir; yes, sir, I ad-

WITH CLANKING CHAINS AND CREAKING LIMBERS BATTERIES ARE GOING TO THE FRONT

IN EIGHTEEN MONTHS' ASSOCIATION WITH THE ARMY WE HAVE NOT SEEN SUCH ACTIVITY

NOT

mit it, discouraged!" And he turned back to gaze again over the strip of water that lay below. Morris regarded my business as his always. It was never what I was going to do, but always what "we" were doing.

"It does look bad," I admitted. On the table stood my typewriter and beside it, two piles of stationery, the one of cable blanks and the other for letter use. The moment we landed these were the first things Morris unpacked. As soon as we entered a room in a new hotel, he would ring for the bell boy and freeze him with a look, as he called for cable blanks. I considered the situation for a moment. Obviously there was nothing definite to be learned here. The rail to Russia was no longer to be figured on. The wires were not working. No news was coming out. The first thing to do was to get on the spot, and the second to provide myself with the means of getting my stories out. The boats had stopped running. Clearly enough there was but one thing to do. These thoughts ran through my mind, and I sat down and wrote a cable to Chicago—"Nothing definite obtainable here. Rumors indicate excellently. If you consider situation warrants, propose charter steamer and cover all points interest Black Sea, answer." I handed it to Morris. From the depths of gloom to the radiancy of bliss his spirits leaped in an instant. He grinned from ear to ear.

"Fine business! Yes, sir, I call that fine busi-

ness," and he was off down the hall like a shot out of a gun. I looked out the window, and a moment later saw him dash off in a two-horse carriage for the cable office. Heaven only knows what he told Leo, the performer of everything in that hotel. Anyway Leo had mounted on the box with the driver, some A D C to his own august person, and with a gallop the horses plunged through the narrow streets, while the assistant on the box called out to clear the way.

While Morris was sending my first dispatch, I was embodying in a three-hundred-word news cable the estimate of the general situation in the Black Sea, as seen from the haze of Constantinople ignorance and aloofness from the outer world. This message was the boiling down of my interviews with the various consuls and ambassadors and the information which Morris had gotten from his tours along the water front among the captains and officers of incoming steamers.

As soon as the first message was out of the way I sent my Ethiopian Mercury with No. 2, and he paid down 243 francs for charges to London, where my paper maintained an office, as a sort of clearing house for European news. As there were some seventy-five men in the various European cities corresponding for the paper, all messages were sent through the English office where news that had already been printed and duplications were "killed," and the valuable stuff

"relayed" to America, thus saving cable tolls on unusable copy.

If the Turkish customs officials were annoying the cable authorities were beyond the pale. Their theory was that every sender of a cable was a suspicious character and must be watched until he has proven his innocence of evil intents towards the Sultan. The very act of sending a dispatch was ground for grave doubt as to his true business in Turkey.

For two days I supposed that my "situation" cable had gone. On the third, in reply to a personal cable, I sent a code message to Minnesota. An hour later it was returned, and with it, to my disgust, my first newspaper story, unsent. The cable office had been unable to read English in the first instance, and thought it best to be on the safe side, and had calmly held the message until it should develop whether or not I really was a safe person to be trusted with such an important privilege as sending a dispatch. My code message of two words had convinced them that something was wrong, with the result that neither story went, and my 243 francs were refunded. I afterwards learned that the operators were not required to know much English, but were carefully drilled in a few important words, such as "riot," "revolution," "disorders," "bomb," "anarchist," etc. The instructions were that any message containing any such dreadful words should be

held pending an investigation. The fact that the allusions in my cable were to Russia, and not Turkey, had no bearing on the case whatever. The operator did not know anything about that, but did know that no peaceable man should be sending any such inflammable words. Anyway it was against the rules, so for the moment I was blocked on my cables, but it was only for the hour which it took me to arrange by wire for an agent in Sansum (which is just across the frontier in Bulgaria) to whom I might mail my cables, thus creating a delay of but a few hours. I reinforced this arrangement by closing a deal with a sad-looking German, whose first name was Lewis, and whose last name I never knew, who stood ready to start at a moment's notice for the frontier, to carry my dispatches in case the mailing system failed. A wire from London the next day told me that my mail wire had been telegraphed from the frontier and had come through safely, with only a few hours' delay, so I held Lewis as a reserve, but as a matter of fact, I only used him once during activities in Turkey. On that occasion I did not dare trust a world beat of 2000 words to the mail, and so it was that the melancholy Lewis went for a trip over the frontier.

But to return to my first morning in Turkey, it was obvious that at least a day must elapse before I could receive the necessary authority to charter a boat (for even the Turks had passed

that telegram) could be expected, so that afternoon I spent in a pouring rainstorm on a tiny launch among the shipping interests of the Bosphorus, looking for a boat that might answer my purposes.

CHAPTER IV

We Charter a Tug and Become Dispatch Bearer of His Britannic Majesty and Learn of Winter Risks in the Black Sea Too Late to Retreat

Chartering a dispatch boat is more bother, and offers as much chance of being fleeced as the purchase of a horse. However, four months in the graft-infested waters of the China coast, with a tug during the war, and another month later spread out from Hong-Kong to the Suez Canal in a vain search for a boat with which to cover the movements of the Baltic fleet en route to its destination in the Straits of Tschurma, had taught me at least one thing, namely, I knew what I wanted. So I spent the afternoon in a launch in the pouring sleet and rain of that bleak winter day on the Bosphorus in looking over the available shipping. Nobody wanted to charter a boat for such a short time as I contemplated needing one. Although there were dozens to choose from on long contracts, when I talked charter by the week, the owners either withdrew entirely, or put up the price so high that my hair stood on end. There was the *Warren Hastings*, the finest salvage boat in the world, to be had at the Darda-

nelles. She was 260 feet long with two funnels, twin screws, that would drive her nineteen knots, and fitted throughout like a yacht. I was sick to get her, but her owners were in England. A small fortune in "rush" cables disclosed that nothing could be done under a month's charter. Next I learned of a British gunboat whose name I forget, that had been sold to a salvage company in the Sea of Marmora. She had left England for delivery to her new owners, and was expected daily. She, too, was speedy, and had accommodations that would delight the heart of an admiral. But again my hopes were blasted. A cable stated that heavy weather in the Bay of Biscay had rendered imperative a week's delay at "Gib" for the overhauling of her engines, and I saw my man-of-war dream fade away. A Russian coasting vessel next appeared on the horizon. I could get her cheap for any length of time, from a week up. She was a sweet little boat with clipper bows and the grace of a fairy, but an investigation showed old compound engines that could only do seven and a half knots in fine weather, and she passed out of the reckoning. A German salvage boat met my requirements, but her owners vetoed the deal at the eleventh hour. Next in line came a twin-screw tugboat called the *Rhone*. I all but seized on her, but her engines did not show Black Sea qualifications, and I stood off her owners, pending further investigation. Frantic wires failed to locate a yacht

within reach which could be had for quick delivery. There was a neat little craft reported obtainable at the Piræus, but the owners could not be reached quickly enough, and she, too, passed into the list of rejected possibilities. Perhaps a dozen others, whose merits failed even to enlist consideration, were presented to my notice by the various shipping men in town. As soon as it became known that I was in the market for a boat and had the "spot" with which to close the deal, I had all the steamship brokers of the Levant at my heels to unload their old tubs on my innocence. When I went out they would get into the carriage and go, too. At lunch, two or three would be waiting, and when I came home to dinner an eager row would be sitting outside my room. It looked as though I should have to take the little *Rhone* in spite of her sewing-machine engines, but finally I ran across a Greek, who rejoiced in the name of M. Pandermaly. He was the head of a fleet of salvage tugs and tow boats that lived in the waters of the Bosphorus and the Black Sea. We spent an hour together, weighing the respective units of his fleet. He showed me the picture of a boat then out of port. She had two funnels and lines that indicated both speed and sea-going qualities.

"Where is she?" I asked, delighted with her appearance. He referred to five telegrams. At last he found the latest record.

"Zungeldak, coaling," he replied.

I told him I knew as much about Zungeldak as I did about the contour of the North Pole, whereat he unearthed a great map of the Black Sea and showed a spot some hundred miles from Constantinople, on the coast of Asia Minor. A pier, a breakwater and about a score of houses constituted the town of really important coal deposits a few miles inland.

"When can she be here?" I asked.

"Two days if I wire," and forthwith he sent the message.

I figured that at least two days must elapse before I could get started anyway, even if the paper sanctioned my scheme, and I felt sure enough it would, to justify myself in taking the first steps.

The next day, as I had anticipated, the reply came from Chicago giving me free hand. The die was cast. I called Morris and turned him loose to get a cook and provision the boat the moment she arrived in port, if on examination she proved fit. Beaming from ear to ear, he disappeared. Ten minutes later there was a tap at my door, and the magnificent Leo entered with the greatest deference and humility.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, "for my intrusion, but your secretary, Mr. Morris, tells me that you expect your private yacht to arrive in the course of a few days. I beg of you, sir, command me if I can be of service in facilitating your plans." And saluting with great respect, he withdrew. I called Morris off on the yacht story

as soon as he came in, but it was too late. My credit in Constantinople was fixed, and as affairs transpired, it was well for me that it was so.

While I waited for my tug to arrive there were other things to do, and as time was the essence of my business, I had not a moment to waste. In the first place, there was the matter of funds to be arranged, and funds, needless to say, are the bone and sinew of any enterprise requiring quick action in Turkey. In China it had been much simpler, for there I had a boat under four months' contract, and my paper arranged a long credit in the Hong-Kong Shanghai bank, on which I drew checks when needed. A dispatch boat (even a small one) costs five or six thousand a month to operate. First there is the charter, and then the fuel bill to meet, and when one is burning from fifteen to twenty tons in the twenty-four hours, at anywhere from $5.00 to $15.00 gold a ton, the cash goes fast. My friend, Pandermaly, insisted on two weeks' cash in advance for charter money, and the balance of the operating expenses to be met by me. Besides this, I needed cable money, for down in this suspicious zone it was all cash in advance at the telegraph offices. I was only paying as far as London, to be sure, but even that was fifteen cents a word. One has to figure on the possibility of at least 5000 words a week, which counts up into big money. The worst of it all was that what I needed was currency, for conditions were so unsettled where I

was going, that I figured I would be laughed at if I asked for sight-drafts or checks to be honored, much less such an impossible thing as credit. Cash here means gold coin of some sort, for the notes that float about in Levantine banking circles are subject to big discounts outside the vicinity of their origin. One cannot conveniently carry more than a thousand dollars in gold, but on this occasion I proposed to stow all I could get in my money belt and pockets, and trust to my revolver and Morris to keep anyone from separating me from it. So I figured on the maximum amount needed and cabled my office to arrange so that I could get it quickly.

Next came the question of how I was to gain access to the ports of interest in Russia, and when in, how I was to get out. I had operated a boat outside of Port Arthur for four months under somewhat delicate circumstances. The Russian admirals were anxious to sink us, and the Japs were equally anxious to be rid of us, although they did not admit it. I learned at that time the somewhat crude way that wars are conducted. The spectacle of a British merchant steamer sunk by the Russians, off the Liotung peninsula one dark night, with the idea that they were destroying my boat, had given me a graphic idea of what press boats must expect when operating in belligerent waters. Since then it has been my policy to avoid getting into trouble without preparing myself in advance for the means of getting out.

Down here in the Black Sea, as I sized it up, there would be no one backing us, and as far as I could see, any irresponsible Russian warship on a strike might sink us with never a murmur or protest from any quarter. But I turned up what I hoped would be a solution to this difficulty. My paper maintained in Europe, besides some sixty local correspondents, four staff representatives, sent out from Chicago, and occupying palatial offices in the four most important capitals of Europe,—one in Trafalgar Square, London; one on the Place de l' Opera, in Paris; one in Friedrich Strasse in Berlin; and one on the famous Nevsky Prospekt in Petersburg. All these men were picked for their tact and social qualifications, and each was supposed to know, and be known, to all the prominent diplomats and statesmen within his territory. At the moment, as I well knew, there was not a foreign office in Europe that had not been frantically trying for two weeks to get word both to and from their consular representatives in South Russia—for all the news that came out of Odessa, Sebastopol, and the Caucasus, these diplomatic gentlemen residing in these places might as well have been at the bottom of the sea. So I sent to our news bureaus in the capitals, the message that the *News* had chartered a dispatch boat to cover all points of interest in the Black Sea, and that I would be glad to carry dispatches from the respective foreign offices to their isolated consuls in the zone of silence, and further-

more, requested an immediate reply. In addition, I cabled Chicago a similar message, asking them to offer our services to the State Department in Washington for a like purpose. A package of dispatches had gotten me out of the clutches of a Japanese fleet in Korean waters the previous year, and I had great faith in the persuasive power of anything with an official seal in getting one out of a tight fix. The next day our London man wired that he had seen the foreign office and that my offer was accepted with thanks, and that the British Ambassador at Constantinople had been instructed to communicate with me. Berlin and Paris declined, but I did not care. I had all that was necessary, for one bunch of official dispatches would answer my purpose as well as a dozen. Besides, I had a wire from Chicago that the State Department was also going to send me cables for delivery in the Black Sea. So far so good. I had a strong card, and I thought I knew how to play it so as to keep myself out of the hands of any irresponsible meddlers. The next day Sir Nicolas O'Conor presented me with two bottles of old Irish whiskey, and asked if I would carry dispatches and official documents to the British consul in Odessa. Without undue enthusiasm, I replied that I would be pleased to be of service to him, and he promised to send them around that night.

At three in the afternoon, the *France* slipped into the Golden Horn, after a terrible trip from

Zungeldak. I went aboard with Pandermaly, and an hour's investigation settled my mind. She was the boat for me. I knew enough about ships to know that if any steamer her size could do my business, it was she. Built in Falmouth, England, five years before, she was 125 feet long and 22 feet in the beam, with nice lines and a maximum draft, bunkers full, of 12 feet. Seven bulkheads and steel-plated construction steadied my mind on her toughness. The engines interested me next, for a tug in any angry sea is like a child in the lap of Niagara, but when I stepped down in the engine room my mind was made up. Triple expansion engines good for 1000 H.P., with two big Bellville boilers and a bunker capacity of 140 tons, enough to keep her at sea for ten days at a fair speed, looked good to me. I didn't care much what the accommodations were, after I had seen the vitals of her, and was pleased when I found them fairly comfortable. Some cabin space forward had been converted into a hold for salvage pumps and wrecking apparatus and bunks for the crew. The rest of the accommodations was directly aft the engines. One entered a small saloon by a ladder through a hatch. Two tiny staterooms flanked a dining-room table, while a nice open fireplace opposite the stairs gave a homelike look that was most acceptable. An oil lamp hung above the table, while two others swung on pivots over the fireplace. Superficially, then, she would do.

"How about her boilers?" I asked. After a little debate the engineer admitted two months without cleaning. Pandermaly agreed to draw the fires and open up the boilers as soon as they cooled, and to turn in with chisels all his available staff, to chip the salt out of the tubes. We closed on the spot, and I went to get a charter drawn. Pandermaly seemed all right, but after all, a Greek is a Greek, and I was playing the safe game, so I got an English attorney to draw my papers. He said he would call in some shipping friends and talk matters over, and would have the charter ready the next morning. What I feared most was my inability to control the crew, for I had agreed to take those on the boat as it stood. They were all Greeks but the stokers, who were Turks. What would I do if they refused to go on at some critical moment? A friend of mine told me that the Greeks had no sporting blood anyway, and would insist on flying to the nearest port at the first cloud that appeared on the horizon. However, there is an element in the Greek character stronger than fear. It is cupidity. At least, that is what my friend told me, and he had lived in Greece and Turkey, so I finally decided to enter a clause in the charter, which, after many wailings, I persuaded Pandermaly to accept, that I thought would cover the situation. It was mutually agreed that if the Captain, with his superior and nautical experience, thought the sea risks too great to venture forth, I should

abide by his decision, but that every time he insisted on going to port against my wishes, he should pay a fine of twice his salary. Every day he remained at sea he got a bonus.

That night a messenger from the British Embassy delivered the dispatches into my hands. I signed the receipt for them and took them to my room. On the top of the envelope in large letters was printed, "On his Britannic Majesty's Service," and on the back in red sealing wax as big as a dollar were the arms of Great Britain. The package was worth its weight in gold to me!

In the meantime my money did not arrive, and I wanted to sail at once. Any inquiry at the cable office brought back the dismal news that there was a blizzard of fearful proportions in western New York, and that the telegraph wires were down. When I had laid in provisions, filled my bunkers with 120 tons of coal and paid two weeks down on the charter in advance and settled my hotel bill, I had only $25 to operate on, and I must say this looked pretty small. I was to sign the charter the next morning, and planned to sail as soon as I could get up enough steam to start the engines. My plans were to go first to Odessa, then to run to Salina at the mouth of the Danube in Roumania, which, I learned, was the nearest uncensored cable. I hoped that my 25 would get me that far, and I could not wait longer in Constantinople for the remittance, and decided

to chance it on getting financial reinforcement when I sent my first cable.

The next day at ten o'clock in the morning I went to my lawyer's office. He had the charter drawn in due form and had brought in three of his shipping friends to talk matters over with me. They were a sad lot. Stiffly they sat against the wall, hands on knees, and regarded me much as an undertaker does a prospective customer.

"Here is your charter," my friend said, "but before you sign it, I would like to have you talk the situation over with my friends. They are shipping men of a great deal of experience in this part of the world, and what they will say ought to carry a great deal of weight with you. As a matter of fact, they think it unwise and very hazardous for you to attempt to get to Odessa in the month of December, especially in that small boat."

One of them came forward and delivered a most violent harangue in French with many gestures and grimaces, the sum total of which, roughly translated was, that the Black Sea in winter was Hell. This annoyed me a little and depressed me also.

"No doubt it is disagreeable," I said. "Probably I shall be as sick as a dog, but still, people don't die of seasickness."

Another long discussion from the second gentleman. He had a cheerful tale of two steel steamers, one of 1500 tons, the other of 2500

tons, wrecked while trying to make the entrance to the Bosphorus within the past ten days. Seven men had escaped from one boat, while everybody had been drowned on the other. This account was not particularly encouraging, but I replied that I had no idea the Black Sea was so bad; however, as I had taken dispatches from the British government and had wired my office that I was sailing that day, I couldn't see my way clear to back down. The fact of the case was, my keenness was a bit chilled. If a 2500-ton steamer had been swamped by the seas, I couldn't see just where my little 250-ton tug boat was going to end up. The last man said little, but what he said was more depressing than the combined testimony of all the rest. He looked at me for a full minute with a pitying and incredulous expression on his face. He did not address me at all, but turned to my attorney and said in broken French:

"Is it possible that this young gentleman will take this small boat—what you call the *France*, and essay to go to Odessa? He will do this in December? He will do this on the Black Sea?" My friend said:

"Yes, he says he can't back out now." (Only he said it in French.)

The man looked at me, smiled faintly, turned up the palms of his hands, shrugged his shoulders and said:

"C'est impossible. Ze unfortunate young man.

He will never come back." He took his hat and went out.

One comes to figure risks pretty carefully in the newspaper business. The idea of the editor at home is that he wants the maximum amount of news, with the minimum amount of risk. When a man is taking chances week in and week out, he must have some basis on which to act, for it is an axiom that a live correspondent, with a small story, is better than a dead one, with a world beat in his pocket. There is no use in a man trying for the best story in the world, if the chances are that he is going to be killed in getting it out. A man is, therefore, not expected to go after a story which he has not a fighting chance of getting away with. Once he has it, however, he is supposed to take any chances in getting it on the cable.

The editors like the men who figure these things closely, and don't get killed or shot up. Nothing is more annoying to the publisher than to send a man to the ends of the earth and fit him out for a campaign at an enormous expense, only to have him killed in the first action through excess of zeal. When this happens, the editor must write off the money spent on the man as a total loss. What is even worse, from his standpoint, is that he has probably lost his chances for covering the situation, unless indeed, he is fortunate enough to have a substitute on the field of action. It is obviously impossible to fig-

ure accurately what risks lie ahead, but it is possible to make much closer estimates than one would imagine. As a matter of fact, war risks, even for soldiers, are far less than one might imagine. But a correspondent, if he be careful, need never face a more than 4% risk, or say one chance in twenty-five. In the Russo-Japanese war, for instance, it was shown that the great bulk of killing of soldiers was from rifle and machine gun-fire, at a range of 200 yards and under. At 800 yards, which is near enough for the most enthusiastic journalist, the risk is much smaller, say one in ten or fifteen. At a mile there is not one chance in a hundred of his being killed by a rifle ball, and the shells are the only thing that need bother him. Now, in the Far Eastern war, only 6% of the entire casualties were from shell-fire, and of that 6% about nine-tenths were from shells bursting where men were bunched together or advancing to the attack in close formation. A man who joins large masses of troops runs a 6% risk, but if he keeps to himself and does not get near batteries in action, his chance of injury at a mile fades to only one in perhaps a hundred and fifty. A man often thinks he has narrowly escaped, but if he comes to estimate the matter carefully, he will find that what he thought was a close call was in matter of fact not one chance in ten. A bullet may pass within a foot of a man's head with a most insidious hum and he assumes that he has had a close call, but if he

comes to calculate that there was room between the course of this bullet and his head for forty similar ones to be placed side by side, and then the forty-first would make only a scalp wound, he must realize that he has not had such a narrow escape after all. The standard which has always seemed justifiable to me is one in five, or a 20% risk, and that only under stress, when there is a prize of a world story in sight. This has seemed to me as the maximum risk a man should knowingly accept. Often he faces greater, but it should not be of his own seeking, for the pitcher that goes to the well too often gets broken at last, and the thoughtful journalist should keep this then in his mind.

When the men had gone, I asked my lawyer what in his judgment the risks really were. Was I exceeding my 20% limit?

"My boy," he said, "I have been on the Pacific and on the Atlantic, on Baffins Bay and in the Behring Sea, in the Gulf of Korea and the Bay of Biscay, but I must say that all these at their worst are not a circumstance to the Black Sea. I can't estimate the percentage of risk, but will say I shall consider you playing in great luck if you get back."

What could I do? My hand was forced, and I had told my paper that I was going, and I had the British dispatches, so I signed the charter. When I returned to the hotel I found Morris with a Greek he had hired to cook for us. The

Greek's name was Stomati; but more of him anon. I sent him down to the *France* with the provisions that he and Morris had been gleefully buying all the morning. When he had gone I sat down and looked at my faithful chief of staff. From my Secretary, he was now the Chief Steward of my private yacht. In the servant's dining room he had risen to be the leading social light. Even the chattering French maids held their tongues while Morris, with great dignity, held forth on European and Far Eastern politics. Now it happened that at this time there was in Constantinople a delegation of negroes from Abyssinia that had come up from their torrid country to get some loan out of the sultan. The valet of the head of this delegation heard Morris discourse and was amazed at his glib utterances, and reported the same to his master, with the result that Morris was soon hobnobbing with the Abyssinian princelings, who finally invited him to come down to their country and engage in building railroads and other minor enterprises. Morris, never abashed, said he thought he could raise $2,000,000 from the colored people of America, who wished to carry out these little enterprises, but stated that for the moment he was pressed for time, but as soon as he had a little more leisure would give the matter his attention. The servants were greatly impressed by all this, and whenever he passed they would stand reverently aside, salute, and speak in awed whispers

of this Ethiopian capitalist, who shed the radiance of his presence upon them. Morris certainly worked his position for all there was in it.

After I had listened to all the evidence of the shipping men that morning, I really felt very apprehensive about our chances on the Black Sea trip, and it seemed to me that the least I could do was to tell Morris what I had been told, and give him the option of avoiding the risk if the adventure was not to his liking. So I told him that I had been talking over the Black Sea proposition with some shipping people.

"It seems it is a pretty bad place," I said, "and these fellows here are willing to lay bets that we won't get back to Constantinople. What do you think about it?"

"All right! Fine business," he replied with a grin, not in the least perturbed. I thought I would put it in plain words, so I said:

"The fact is, Morris, two large steamers have been sunk within ten days, trying to get into the Bosphorus, and they do say here that the *France* is too small for December seas, and in a word, that we will never get to Odessa anyway, much less ever come back to Constantinople." This sobered Morris a little, and he stopped grinning. "I don't want to urge you to go," I continued. "I have told you all I know about the situation. Personally, I don't think it is as bad as they say, but, as a matter of fact, I do think we take a pretty big risk, and if you have any particular

reasons for wanting to get home, you want to think about it now. I can give you your wages to date and your fare to Kansas City. Now it's up to you. What do you want to do?" He walked to the window and looked out for perhaps a minute. Then he came back.

"What are you going to do?" he said.

"My hand is forced," I replied. "I have wired my paper that I leave to-night. I am going anyway."

"All right," said Morris. "If you go, I go."

"That settles it," I replied. "Pack up and have everything aboard by six o'clock to-night."

That afternoon I paid Pandermaly his due and went aboard the *France* for what was to prove the most strenuous two weeks in my experience.

CHAPTER V

We Sail Out into the Black Sea in the Salvage Steamer France and for Sixty-five Hours Shake Dice with Death

My ideas of the Black Sea prior to my arrival in Constantinople were based on childhood recollections of maps of Asia and Europe in the geography. On these, that all but land-locked bit of water appeared about an inch long and half an inch across, and wholly unworthy of serious consideration. I had always remembered it as a kind of overgrown lake. The day I chartered the *France* my ideas began to undergo a revolution, which increased in intensity with each succeeding day. I have now totally revised my ideas. To fully appreciate this gentle expanse, it is necessary to survive a fortnight in December spent on a tugboat. If some universal power, bent on manufacturing the world, should ask for a receipt for making a duplicate, I should suggest the following: One hole 900 miles long by 700 in breadth. Make it from 600 to 1000 feet deep, sow the bottom promiscuously with rocks, scatter a few submerged islands in the most unexpected places, and fill this in with the coldest water obtainable. Surround the shores

with a coast like that of Maine, and wherever there seems, by any oversight, to be a chance of shelter, insert a line of reefs and ledges of sharp rocks. Add a tide which varies every day in the year. Now import a typhoon from the South seas, mix judiciously with a blizzard from North Dakota and turn it loose. Add a frosting of snow and sleet, garnish with white-caps, and serve the whole from a tugboat, and you have a fair conception of the ordinary December weather in the Black Sea.

Subsequent inquiry on this subject has brought me to the belated realization of the fact that I am not the first, by a long way, to have reached the same sad conclusions. Some thousands of years ago a "Seeing Asia" trireme from Greece discovered these hospitable waters. The people who were then living at the Hellespont, having had personal experiences along this line, tried to head off the enterprise. The Greeks, however, were strenuous people, and were not to be persuaded. They listened carefully to the descriptions that were presented to their notice of what they might expect in the Black Sea, and then held a council of war, and decided that they would square matters in advance with the gods of the place, so they rounded up a few bullocks and unearthed some wine which they had with them, and proceeded to make sacrifices and libations to the Deity, who was supposed to be so hostile to intruders. To clinch matters they

winked at each other, and decided to call the new waters on which they were about to embark, the "Euxine" or kindly seas. They were all delighted with themselves and thought they had the matter settled and a pleasure trip insured, so one fine day they sailed out of the Bosphorus where the Deity (who hadn't been a bit impressed) was licking his chops and waiting to give them a warm reception. Sad to relate, they never came back. If they had, they would certainly have called in the name which they have sent down through the centuries for this wicked caldron, where wind and wave mingle to the confusion of man.

From Constantinople for forty miles each way there is a rock-bound coast. The cliffs rise sheer above the sea, that breaks in clouds of angry spray against those bleak and unresisting walls. Eastward from the Bosphorus for a score of miles, government life-saving stations every two-thousand meters bespeak the menace of this deadly coast, louder than any description. In January, 1903, on this single strip of shore, eighty ships were broken in a single night, and I know not how many men lay down their lives as they strove in vain to make headway against the turbulence of hurricane and tide that swept them to their doom. Northward lies another belt of coast; bleak and forlorn for forty miles it stands against the sky. At the very corner of the sea, the Bosphorus winds like a serpent through a confusion of rugged fort-clad hills. The en-

trance is a mere defile. A few thousand yards back it bends sharply to the south, thus from a few miles at sea, there seems to the eye of the mariner searching for a haven of refuge nothing but an unbroken line of cliffs. Two light-houses on outlying islands mark the entrance to the channel. When the weather is clear and his engines still can breast the wind and seas, the captain may enter safely enough between this very Scylla and Charybdis, but woe to him who, while beating towards this refuge, is overtaken by one of those clouds of driving snow and sleet that shut down about the waters of the Black Sea thicker than a London fog. These then are a few of the conditions which have made it a paying investment for three salvage companies to locate their headquarters in the Bosphorus. Yes, three companies, each with a fleet of a dozen or more boats do a booming business while the storms of winter last. The profit from the reaping of these few months is so great that the expenses of these entire fleets are paid for the entire year, and money for dividends besides, yielded from the misfortunes of sailing ships and steamers that end their careers on the inhospitable shores that girt the Euxine, or are swamped and sunk while seeking some port of safety. Some of these things I learned from my crew as I sat on the *France* that December evening waiting for steam to turn the engines. The boilers had been cleaned and the fires lighted early that

afternoon, and the soft humming forward told of the pressure mounting steadily in the gauges. I had a more careful look at my crew.

Was there ever a sadder lot to the eyes of an American embarking on an enterprise, where quick action and loyal support were the bone and sinew of the expedition? They were all pretty poor, but the skipper (old man Gileti) was the worst. Stupid, slow and heavy, he made one's heart sick to look at him. His staff were all Greeks, dirty, shiftless and dismal. The only redeeming feature was in the engine room, for both engineers were bright and alert, and their department as neat and clean as a new pin. The stokers were all Turks, and distinguished for being several degrees blacker with dirt than the Greeks. Then there was a sad little cabin boy, who, as far as I could observe, did about three-fourths of the work on the ship, which nobody else wanted to do. He was running about from dawn till late at night, serving everybody from the skipper to the stokers. Another youth lived on a bench in the galley and was supposed to exercise some useful function, but I was never able to learn just what it was. Whenever I saw him he was eating scraps or licking the dishes, and so we called him the Scavenger. Whenever he was called on for action, he always flew for the galley and sent the cabin boy or else Spero, who was the only other hard worker on deck. Angelo Spero! Like the cabin-boy, his was a life of toil.

From the chain locker in the bows to the hold, where all the rubbish lived aftside, there was not an hour in the day when there were not loud calls for Spero. As Morris said:

"Old Spero is one of them sad guys that does everybody else's work, and then is thankful that he don't get booted besides."

Last, but not least, was my faithful cook. He was the treasure that Morris had dug up in Constantinople. Stomati was a Greek—a sea cook, he. The roar of the wind and lurch of the ship were as the blood in his veins. For twenty-five years he had lived the life of the galley. The China seas, the Great Australian Bight, the sweeps of the South American coast were as familiar to him as the native waters of the Piræus and the Ægean Sea, beside which he played as a child. He had sailed under every flag in Europe and had pursued the culinary art in all quarters of the globe. He spoke seven languages, all equally unintelligently. While we waited for steam that first night, he expatiated in a composite language, which embodied a judicious mingling of English, French, German and Roumanian, all the terrors of the Black Sea. If there was any unfortunate event which had transpired in that dismal zone during his lifetime, Stomati knew it. He could tell the names of all the ships that had been wrecked, how many people had been drowned on each. He could not only tell you the past, but was eager to make

estimates of the number he expected would be drowned in the coming winter. He, himself, had been wrecked three times already, and he had stories about frozen bodies, the details of which have never been exceeded, even in the columns of the yellow journals. Old Man Gileti, the skipper, had come to grief five times, while Spero, he didn't know how many times, but should guess it must be at least a dozen. That was why Spero looked so sad. Morris listened with mouth open to all these dismal forebodings, but smiled sickly every time I caught his eye.

There are rules for everything in Constantinople and Turkey, and the list of provisions which cover operations in Turkish harbors are as long as your arm. Among other things, there is a standing law which forbids the departure of any ship after the sun has set. An exception was made, however, on behalf of the *France* as she was registered as a salvage tug, and was licensed to come and go at her own free will, for even the Turks admitted that a sinking ship might well refuse to wait till morning before taking the final plunge. So it transpired that about one o'clock in the morning of the 16th of December, we pulled up our anchor, swung clear of the shipping in the Golden Horn, and with smoke pouring in clouds from our two red funnels, we turned her bows down the Bosphorus, towards the Euxine. The skipper had promised Odessa in thirty hours, and I was pleased enough as I turned in with the

dispatches of his Britannic Majesty Edward the VII under my pillow.

I did not sleep long.

The moment we emerged from the Bosphorus into the Black Sea I knew it, and everyone else on the *France* knew it. The creak of timbers and the swish of clothes describing parabolas on their hooks, with the crash of glass inside the saloon, told me that we were at sea. A look through the small six-inch port above my bunk revealed the intermittent light of the moon now and again breaking through fleecy clouds that were scudding across the sky. To the thud of the engines just forward of my bunk, I could hear the seas swishing past. The little port-hole was buried every other minute in seething froth as we rolled in the swell. We were doing a good fourteen knots an hour. I comforted my inward apprehensions with the cheering thought that this speed maintained would land us in Odessa even earlier than the captain had promised. I slept until daylight, when I was awakened by the increased rolling of the ship. The prospect of good weather, which the moon of the previous night had seemed to hold forth, was dissipated as I took a glance out of the port. The dull leaden sky had turned loose a very demon of a raw and piercing wind that was beating the sea into a passion of discontent. The *France*, straining and groaning in every joint, was valiantly driving her little nose into each

sullen sea that rose before her as though to block her course and drive her back. In other seas that I had traveled, the sweep is long between the waves. Even on the Pacific a small boat can crest the waves, slip downward in the hollow and raise to meet the next. It was different here. Before a ship can recover from the first wave another sweeps her deck. In great black ridges of spray-flanked water, the seas crash upon the decks. Now they are dead ahead, now from the starboard quarter and now from the port. It seemed to me that it must be rougher than usual, but I said nothing. My instinct was to go on deck at once, but internal premonitions of disaster urged me to remain in my bunk for the moment. Morris, on the couch in the saloon, was groaning out his anguish in spite of his thirteen trips across the Pacific. I smiled as I listened to him.

"Morris," I called.

"Standing by like steel, sir," he answered in a weak voice as he staggered to the door of my tiny cabin. He was the palest colored man I ever saw. I was somewhat to the bad myself, but he looked so much worse than I felt that it cheered me up.

"Sick?" I queried.

"Not seasick, sir," he replied, his pride and his thirteen trans-Pacific journeys holding him up, "but suffering from a touch of indigestion, sir. Indeed, it is nothing more. The fact is, I at-

tribute it to the potted ham of last night, sir," and he withdrew hastily.

A moment later the hatch was thrown open and Stomati floundered down the ladder in a cloud of spray. He shook the salt water out of his hair and grinned a little as he delivered a message from the skipper.

"Bad sea. No headway. Wanted my permission to slow down." I was disgusted and told myself that the old man was flinching at the first sign of heavy weather.

"Tell him no," I advised Stomati, who immediately disappeared. Ten minutes later Nicholas appeared as a second ambassador from the captain. He spoke excellent English, if he was a Greek. He explained that our 120 tons of coal brought us so low in the water that the ship was pounding badly. I looked at him and realized that he knew his business better than I did, so I told him to cut the speed down to 7 knots. Instead of improving, things seemed to grow worse with each succeeding minute. Even Morris, who was more than half dead to the world, did not need to be told that she was pounding fearfully. We could feel her lift her bows above the water, poise for a moment, and then, like the downward blow of a sledge-hammer, fall into the sea with a crash that shook her from stem to stern, like a rat in the teeth of a terrier. Every time she surged down the rush of water over her decks told us that she was shipping seas at every lurch.

The crash of timbers and boards over my head seemed to indicate that we were really making a pretty heavy job of it. The noise and uproar of tons of water crashing against the steel deck-house overhead continued. Every now and again we would hear a piece of woodwork ripped off from some hatch or companion-way with a scream of nails loosening their rusty hold, and the snapping of breaking wood. By and by little drops of water began to leak down through the ceiling. I watched this drip mechanically, as it came faster and faster through the sky-light and seams of the deck above my head, until at last the drip became a trickle, and the trickle a stream. Puddles began to appear on the floor, first on one side and then on the other, as the ship rolled heavily in the seaway. About ten the hatch opened and again the engineer appeared. He was wet to the skin.

"We can't keep this seven knots and our heads above water," he said. "We'll have to slow her down some more." So I said "All right." The look on his face told me it was time for me to get up, so I staggered out into the saloon and got into my clothes. Lamps were swinging to the ceiling, and the howl and roar of water on the outside and the drip of it on the inside did not make me feel any too happy. Throwing on my heaviest campaign coat, I went up the ladder. The hatch swung out heavily against the wind. For a moment I stood clinging to the

railing of the skylight. Like a wounded duck the *France* was beating her wings and laboring to make headway against the tumult, which strove to force her back. Great mountains of sea rose before us in successive chains as far as the eye could reach. Like assaults of infantry in close columns they stretched for miles, and bore down upon us. Each time the staunch little tug would put her nose into the angry front, she plowed forward. For a moment she would smother in the crash of waters, then she would shake herself clear of spray and foam and lift to meet the next sea. As I stood there, a great black silent roller struck her on the bow. She bent beneath the impact and then before she could stagger to her feet, another hit her, and three feet deep the seas swept across her decks. A coop of chickens torn from its position near the galley came sailing down on the crest of the water and struck a stanchion, breaking it open with a crash, and as the sea flowed out of the scuppers, some dozen wet and melancholy fowls came fluttering and squawking out of the wreck. They were wet and seasick, but their impact with the cold salt water had put some spirit into their souls. The rooster, who seemed to be in command of the expedition, spread himself on the rolling deck, closed his eyes, stretched his neck and uttered one long triumphant crow, whereat his followers began to cackle. At that moment another wave struck us, and as it went roaring

over the stern it took that sad company of birds with it. There they sat on the crest of the wave; surprise, indignation and distress were pictured on their silly faces as I saw them disappear in the wake.

Drenched and cold, I fought my way forward and crawled up over the back of the deck-house to the bridge deck, where the two gallant little red funnels were belching smoke into the spray and mist, undaunted by any adverse seas, while the engines beat out with steady rhythm the tune of their determination to fight on until the last. On the bridge old man Gileti, covered with oil-skins, made dismal grimaces and deprecating gestures when he saw me. With Stomati to interpret I soon learned the meaning of his shrugs and murmurings. These big seas were getting to the *France* and we could not afford to take any more chances. Already the two forward hatches had been beaten in. The chain locker, the forecastle and the salvage hold were filled with water flush to the deck. So low had we sunk forward that each sea swept us from end to end. We slowed down to five, to three, and at length to one knot to keep her from pounding into those relentless seas that surged and beat at us from every side. In the meantime all available hands were working at the pumps and bailing water for dear life. I saw at a glance that we were in a bad way. Two out of seven bulkheads were flooded. If the water forced the next, where the

boilers were, we would sink like a stone. We were making no headway, and our efforts to reclaim the flooded parts were of small avail. The skipper renewed his plea for a refuge on the Bulgarian coast. It was now past noon, and the men were wet and cold, and even the dispatches must wait, so I gave assent and we turned her nose for the shore.

Some miles south of Konstanza a great headland peninsula juts into the sea and swings a little south. This is called Kavarna Head. In the elbow of this bend is a semi-bay where even the north wind fails to wreak its vengeance, and to this shelter it was that we slid in about six that night, wet and cold, decks sea-swept and the cables twisted into snarls of halyards and guys. Fragments of wreckage stuck in the scuppers and the salt encrusted funnels told of the storm we had braved. Once in the still water we let go the starboard anchor, which slipped into it with a splash and cheerful rattling of cables as the steel links came clanking over the rollers out of the chain locker. From six to ten that night the work of ousting the water was carried on, and when four bells struck, we were as fit and seaworthy as when we slid out of the Bosphorus and ran into the jaws of what I subsequently learned was one of the worst storms of the year.

The wind howled outside our haven, and the wet and weary men appealed strongly, so we lay to for the night, the steam simmering

in the boilers, and the crew, exhausted by their hard day's fight against wind and weather, slept on the grating over the boilers, for the forecastle was still too cold and wet for comfort.

In the dawn of as dismal a day as ever brought light we pulled up our anchor and turned our nose seaward again. The wind had subsided, but the waves still snapped at us, licking us now and anon with an angry slap. But the strength of it had oozed with the dying of the wind. Clouds hurried across the sky as we dipped and plunged northward, parting the seas to right and left as the sturdy little ship responded to the steady throb of the loyal heart down in the engines, that beat out its 110 revolutions to the minute. By noon the sun was breaking through, and the sea had subsided enough so that we could keep plates on the table, and the first meal at sea of the trip was served. When I came on deck after *tiffin* the sun was shining and the air as fresh and invigorating as a fall morning on the prairies in North Dakota. To the west stretched the broken coast of Roumania. An hour's run or more northward, one could discern with a glass the site of that prosperous little nation's greatest port, Konstanza. Two dreary nights had made me feel the need of rest. My saloon was cold and damp. The only place of refuge, where warmth was sure, was the engine room, and there I went, throwing myself on the rude bench in one corner where the engineer spent the idle moments of his

watch, and fell fast asleep. About three I was aroused by being vigorously shaken. It was the engineer. As I sat up I noticed, to my surprise, that we were again rolling heavily.

"Well, what's the trouble now?" I asked sleepily. He never smiled, but looked at me grimly.

"Bad. Very bad," he said.

"What's bad?" I asked. I was too tired to be even apprehensive. I wished he had let me sleep instead of bothering me with his fears.

"Come on deck," he said, without any further explanation, and led me up the steel ladder to the top of the gratings and out on the deck. I could scarcely believe my eyes. The darkness of dusk had settled down upon us, and cloud upon cloud of snow were driving past us. I could barely see across the deck where the captain and the bulk of the crew were wringing their hands. As they all spoke at the same time, either in Greek or some other unknown tongue, and as each seemed to have a distinct and separate idea in mind as to what the exigencies of the situation required, it was difficult to gather what all the excitement was about. Everybody was presenting at one and the same moment a different course of action, each of which it would appear was the only road to safety. The captain urged in Greek that turning about and going somewhere astern was the only thing to do. One engineer advised Sulina in broken Engilsh, while the other had some ideas in Greek which have not yet come through.

The Turkish fireman and others of our crew all wanted to do something or other, and each was howling the merits of his policy at the top of his lungs in his own peculiar dialect. Stomati was there with his seven different languages, which he was using all at once. Someone had dug him out of the galley and brought him forward to use his influence on the situation. Speaking a word in each of the seven languages to one of English, he started out into a detailed account of the storms of the Black Sea, their origin and cause, and their inevitably fatal termination. He had all the others faded for noise, and he soon had them in the background. Already the sea was lashing itself into a vortex of fury. The engineer had eased her down to half speed. I could scarcely believe my eyes. An hour before I had not seen a cloud in the sky, and yet we now appeared to be in the heart of a very enterprising blizzard. However, I could not see the overpowering danger, and personally I favored Odessa as being as safe as any other course and most convenient to the ends I had in view. Stomati finally got my ear, and, backed by old man Gileti, Spero and the mate, explained that these storms were the peril of the Black Sea; that at any moment it might turn up a cyclone and bring up seas that would swamp us in five minutes. I could not see how this could be possible myself, and neither did Morris, who had recovered his equilibrium, and we told them so. Stomati at once

reached into the past and told of the wreck of the Roumanian mail, a 4000-ton boat of 21 knots, that had gone down only 20 miles from where we were, in just such a storm. Everyone knew of a dozen similar cases, and when word went aboard of what Stomati was saying, they all began at once to tell of the disasters that they knew of personally. I was beginning to be impressed, when, without warning, just as it had come, the snow ceased, and in two minutes the sun was out and shining brightly, with only a choppy sea and a black cloud sweeping astern to show the passing of the storm. Everyone, but Morris and I, seemed to be disappointed about it. However, they accepted the inevitable and returned gloomily to their posts, and I went back to the engine room bench. By eight o'clock that night we were off the mouth of the Danube at a place called Sulina Mouth. I had dined and reinforced myself with a cigar, when the captain, with his deprecating gestures and up-turned palms, came down and asked for permission to put in for the night. This would mean a delay of twenty-four hours at least, so I declined flatly. We were already nearly forty-eight hours out of the Bosphorus, and Odessa still a night's run away, besides the night in port and one day lost. I considered it a very bad precedent. Stomati, who was clearing the dinner table, began to reminisce about a series of wrecks that had occurred between Sulina and Odessa, but after the false

alarm snowstorm in the afternoon, I was determined to try the sea, even if it should be rough.

"Old Gileti has got cold feet sure," volunteered Morris, who stood at my elbow as we watched the harbor lights of Sulina fade away beyond our bubbling wake. I was inclined to believe that he was right.

The moon was making frantic efforts to break through the clouds, and, though there was a brisk wind blowing, I believed we would have an easy night, and so I turned in, but I never made a worse mistake. About one o'clock I awoke with a realization of that fact. What we had been through before was child's play. I threw on my coat and got into the dimly lighted saloon. The place looked as though a ten inch shell had burst. Broken glass, trunks turned upside down, clothes thrown from their hooks, and confusion everywhere. Outside the wind and waves roared like a thousand freight trains. It took me two minutes to get the hatch open against the wind which seemed to be blowing everywhere at once. I could not see my hand before my face, but felt my way along the rail to the engine room skylight, then to the deck-house, pausing to cling tight for the lurches that followed every succeeding dip. It had come off cold, and ice was forming everywhere. I felt the thin coating on bar and brace as I climbed to the bridge deck, and, watching my opportunity, crawled toward the wheel house, half blinded by the spray which swept the

ship from end to end. The noise was too great for conversation, but the grim faces of the men at the wheel bespoke their views of the situation louder than words. They were two strong men, but flung this way and that they were, as they wrestled with the wheel, which spun and jerked under their hands like a live thing, as it answered the writhings of the rudder beaten by the seas that lashed astern. I tried to stand on the bridge, but snow and sleet-like darts of fiery steel bit my face and drove me back for shelter to the wheel-house. Every time we struck a sea the spray rose in solid sheets, beating against the thick glass windows until we had to raise the wooden storm sashes to keep them from breaking. The spume of the waves, whipped from their crest by the wind, blew across our decks in torrents, and high above the funnels. Every time she rose to take the sea in her teeth I drew my breath for the dip and surge of water that followed. Every time she plunged downward it seemed as though it must be her last. Again and again she buried her nose in the seething vortex, and then, trembling in every fiber, she would shake herself clear and rise to clinch the next sea that swept upon her. I stood there for hours watching the struggle. Puny man and the fragile creation of his hand against the forces of nature. Alone and in the blackness of night, we fought it out to the tune of the howling wind and the crash of water dashing itself to spray against our decks. Hour

WHEN THE FRANCE ENTERED ODESSA HARBOR AFTER THE STORM
SHE WAS PRETTY WELL SHAKEN UP

SULINA—THE MOUTH OF THE DANUBE RIVER

after hour passed and still she responded to the gallant little engines that never faltered. Half the time the screw would be beating air, the engines racing and shaking the boat as in an ague. The engineers clung desperately to the iron frame of the engine as they dropped in the oil on the working bearings. The firemen in the stoke hole braced themselves against the bulk-head as they heaved the coal.

The struggle lay in steam and the endurance of the engines, and they knew it, and each man shut his teeth and did his part.

Two o'clock came, three o'clock, four o'clock, and still we struggled on. Suddenly the wind stopped, the sea began to subside and the moon came out. All was lovely, only cold, so cold that one's marrow seemed to freeze. Three hours more and the sun rose red in the east, flanked by two sun-dogs that justified the cold we felt. It was a perfect winter's day. Way off on the port bow a great bluff began to loom up, and little by little the towers of a great city were discernible.

An hour later, cased in ice, with icicles hanging from every part, the *France* crept into port. We were wreathed in ice from stem to stern. The thermometer marked ten degrees below zero. I did not speak Greek, but the grip old man Gileti gave my hand, spoke his relief louder than words as we rounded to behind the breakwater in the haven, for which we had struggled for sixty-five hours—Odessa!

CHAPTER VI

We Land in Odessa on the Day Set by the Revolutionists for a General Massacre, but Because of Effective Martial Law, Secure Only a "General Situation" Story

Odessa, as we viewed it from our ice encrusted bridge that freezing December morning, was a distinct disappointment. Behind the breakwater that stands between the pounding seas of the Euxine and the anchorage and wharves, the city lay, gray, cold, gloomy and forbidding. From the dirty streets of the shipping district the town scrambles up steeply and spreads itself out over the bleak landscape that lies beyond. Long lines of what the Europeans call "goods wagons," and what we term freight cars, were strung along both pier and water front. A half dozen or more stranded cargo steamers chained up to the wharves, and a few dreary looking tugboats combined to make the setting of one of the most desolate scenes that I recall. An occasional figure slinking about among the cars, and a single miserable Russian sentinel that stood near one of the gray stone warehouses served only to intensify the utter loneliness of the place. Over a year before I had been in Dalny, pressing

close on the heels of the invading army of Japan. Big ten-inch shells from naval turrets miles away at sea, reinforced by brigades of bristling infantry that closed in from the north, had forced the Muscovites to evacuate. The retreating columns had straggled out by the light of blazing warehouses tuned to the crash of falling timber—this destruction their own handiwork to keep Dalny out of the Japanese hands. But even that far finger of the Russian reach, obtained in crazy frenzy of expansion and abandoned in smoke and confusion, was cheerful compared to Odessa. There at least one saw the new life of the Oriental armies that poured in by brigades, divisions and army corps in the place of the retreating Russians, but here in the great commercial city of southern Russia there was a gloom, silence and abandon that spelled revolution, disorder and economic disaster, more loudly than the smoking embers of deserted Dalny. Morris, who did not indulge much in sad reflections, brought me back to the business in hand by the true, if somewhat ungrammatical observation—

"There sure ain't nothing doing ashore or afloat in these diggings, and that's a cinch."

I agreed with the spirit if not with the construction of this comment. A careful survey of the situation, as visible through my binoculars, from the bridge of the *France* suggested the possibility that the irresponsible population had all gone into the interior to have an agrarian

riot or celebrate in some other simple way dear to the Russian heart. Nevertheless, we had not come all this distance and spent three cheerless soaking nights at sea to give up the game at the first sign of discouragement. Here was where the dispatches of his Britannic Majesty came to the rescue. After an elaborate search through the International Signal Code I found a combination of flags which exactly filled our needs, and promptly hoisted to our single halyard the colored bunting of the code which stood for the letters "J. & S." This means "I am carrying government dispatches," and implies that everything in sight should co-operate at once. The effect was even better than I had anticipated. A few minutes after our flags had been snapping in the icy wind that blew in from the Black Sea I saw the launch of the quarantine doctor come puffing out from behind some tugboats, where it had been lying in ambush. The doctor himself was standing in the bow. He was a portly man, and willing hands were necessary to assist him up the side of the *France*. He was one of those foreigners who cherish that most regrettable of ideas, namely, that he could speak English. The result was that he flatly declined to be addressed in any other language. This made it embarrassing and occasioned no end of delay as his English was of the purely school book brand. It contained such pertinent phrases as "How is your wife's brother? Will you go for a walk

in the park to-day? Has your sister's husband a good pen?" and so on. This was all right, as far as it went, but did not assist me much in the business in hand. He seemed to be wholly unprepared in his vocabulary to take care of such a commonplace and uninteresting subject as a health examination. He held me on deck in the cold while he ran through his available list of sentences, which really gave him an excellent insight into the status of my family, the number of my brothers and sisters and their respective ages. He followed this with a few irrelevant questions about the weather, and ended up with "Do you find Russia a pleasant country?" This seemed to be the last sentence which had stuck in his head. After that he paused for breath, and before he could commence again I got him down into my saloon where we had just been having breakfast. When he saw the table he forgot all about his English aspirations and burst into French, and, with tears in his eyes and a wealth of exclamation, told us how hungry he was. We offered the remnants of the breakfast and he fell on the food with an avidity which was appalling. The remnants went fast and we had to send a rush order to Stomati in the galley for reinforcements. He ate fast and well. Between gulps he told us that in spite of his fine uniform and steam launch, he only drew $40.00 a month for his services. I endeavored to be politely interested, until I found that he had troubles which would fill

a book, and so gently but firmly cut him off. When he had finished the last scrap he turned to business with evident regret. It isn't really business, of course, but it is what passes under that name in Russia. First he took off his coat, then he undid his sword and took off his belt and placed it on the table. He then looked all around the room and asked for a cigar. He got out his penknife and carefully cut off the end, and then lighted it. Great folios of paper were then produced, and sheet upon sheet of printed forms were piled upon the table, and the real work begun. Detailed information as to my lineage, aye, even unto the second generation previous, were called for, until I was ashamed to confess that I did not know my grandmother's maiden name. Then I had to give all the names of the crew, and these had to be copied in three different blank forms to comply with Russian law. As my staff were Greeks and Turks, with impossible names, we spent perhaps half an hour in making these entries, discussing the correct spelling of each as it was entered in the forms. Hoping to facilitate business, I gave the inspector three fingers of good old Irish whiskey, but I never made a worse mistake. He at once became genial and wanted to take a recess and tell me the story of his life in his school book English. Finally, with the co-operation of the entire staff and the testimony of most of them, under cross-examination, we convinced him and saw him duly enter in

triplicate first, that we had no sickness aboard, second, that we had no mysterious corpse packed away below the deck. (Just why anyone wanted to smuggle a corpse into Odessa when the supply there was greatly in excess of the demand, has never been clear to me.) Third, that we were not bringing in any large quantity of fresh water (which might be full of Turkish germs), and a lot of other equally immaterial and ridiculous information. When all was said and done he politely informed me that I could not land until he had made his report and some other official had made some other sort of examination. This seemed to me to be about the limit. With all the dignity at my command I ordered Morris to bring out the dispatches. This he did with a great show of importance. I showed the wretched official the red seals and the official stamps and then said:

"These are the dispatches of his Britannic Majesty, Edward VII. If you choose to take the responsibility of detaining here a moment longer the bearer of such important papers, of course you can do so. I have no means of forcing you. For your own information, however, I will tell you that such action on your part will be reported to the British foreign office and your case will be most vigorously investigated. But you must do as you think best."

He wilted on the spot, and took us ashore in his launch, where he led us before some dignified gentlemen in gorgeous uniforms who all talked

at once in Russian. I waited and tried to look important. My "red sealing waxed" dispatches were again laid out for inspection, and my friend, the medical examiner, evidently repeated my remarks to him, for an orderly was sent on the run for another launch, and I was rushed across the harbor before another and higher official, who was covered with gold lace, where there was another interminable discussion, which finally ended in our being turned over to a burly ruffian in uniform, whom I learned was assigned to act as my chief of staff while I remained in town. Fortunately he spoke a little German, and two minutes after I had him alone I convinced him that his services were unnecessary. His conscience troubled him for disobeying his superior officer, but five roubles fixed that, so, four hours after we dropped anchor, I found myself free to pursue my way unhampered.

The situation in Odessa at this time was intolerable, as I found within an hour after I had delivered the dispatches to the British consul, and had an opportunity of getting down to work. That day, as I then learned, was the Czar's birthday. For weeks previous there had been talk of another grand demonstration on the part of the revolutionists. It had been pleasantly rumored that there was to be a promiscuous killing to be conducted under the auspices of the revolutionary committee. These prearranged events rarely materialize in Russia, as the gentlemen supposed

to be in charge of such proceedings are generally dug out of their cellars and are well on their way to Siberia on the date set for their entertainments. My experience in five visits to Russia during the period of convulsion was that the average Muscovite revolutionist has no equal (off the stage) for simplicity and ineffective activity. The moment you set eyes on him you know he is a revolutionist. His hair stands on end, his eyes are wild and his dress is in disorder. In fact, nothing is lacking to complete the make-up of the part. Every time he has an opportunity he climbs on a barrel or some other conspicuous spot in a public place and proceeds to air his ideas. He will point out at the top of his lungs the advantages of bombs and miscellaneous assassinations. He has a well developed programme as to what ought to be done with the Czar, and as for the grand dukes, he simply tears out his hair in handfuls when he talks about them. When he isn't engaged in talking he goes off and buries himself in a garret and writes inflammatory and compromising letters and articles, which he leaves about just as a stage hero does important family papers. The police (whom you know to be police, just as quickly as you recognize a revolutionist to be a revolutionist) stand around and look wise and make notes. The moment any trouble is brewing they go out and make a big bag of assorted anarchists, bombists and inoffensive but loquacious students, who have

been airing their undigested views on sociology and politics. When people get together for the glorious riot which has been planned for months in advance, lo and behold! All of the leading spirits are kicking their heels in the nearest fortress or packing up their belongings for a trip into Siberia. So it was at this time in Odessa. The revolutionists had been talking so long about what they were going to do on the Czar's birthday that everybody in town knew of their plans, which, among other variations, included a massacre of all foreigners. I never learned just why the foreigners were to be massacred, but it seemed to be admitted in revolutionary circles that this was the proper thing to be done. General Kaulbars of Manchurian war fame had been made military governor of South Russia. He had rushed in two regiments of barbarous looking Cossacks, who had been instructed to "fire with ball" at the first sign of trouble, and they certainly looked as though they were prepared to do it. The order was published and everybody knew what to expect.

In spite of these precautions nearly everybody in Odessa was living in a state of nerves as to what might happen. The erratic behavior of the mutinous fleet the summer before, headed by the battleship *Knias Potempkin*, had aroused general apprehension as to what extent irresponsibility might carry the situation. The people distrusted the army and the army the people. The

soldiers hated their officers and the officers feared their own soldiers, and both officers and soldiers distrusted the population of the town, while the foreigners had no confidence in anybody. The so called Jewish massacre a few months before did not tend to quiet the minds of the peaceful residents. At that time the town had been given over for three days into a free-for-all fight and general riot, where everybody killed anybody they had it in for, and a few Jews thrown in for luck. All of the foreign consulates had made detailed preparations for trouble. Rendezvous had been agreed upon for the mustering of the various flocks. A company of soldiers was to be allotted to each consulate to act as an escort to the water front, where ships were held in readiness for immediate departure to places of safety. The residents had been out of touch with the outer world for weeks, owing to the postal and telegraph strike and railroad tie-up. All seemed to think that their respective governments were trying to do something to relieve them and that the international fleet that at last accounts had been making its silly demonstration off the Dardanelles, was going to be allowed to pass through into the Black Sea. No one thought that the Sultan would make any objection to allowing a few cruisers to pass the Bosphorus to protect the trembling subjects of the European governments at the various ports, but while the foreigners at every port where Russian supremacy still held

were sitting up nights waiting to be murdered, and praying for the protection of the blue jackets, six inch rifles and machine gun batteries, those very warships were sitting peacefully outside Macedonia, conducting their childish and ineffective bluff.

The economic conditions could scarcely reach a worse stage than those existing at that time in all South Russia. Business was absolutely at a standstill, credit had collapsed and thousands of men had been thrown out of employment. The demand for most of the products of local manufacture had fallen off to almost nothing. The directors of enterprise dared not accumulate a surplus of their product for fear their warehouses would be destroyed at the next spasm of riot, so factories had closed up and the employés were in the streets, destitute and in the middle of winter. Most of the better class had left town, closed their residences, and dismissed their servants, who were also out of town. The railroad, telegraph and postal men were all on a strike, the end of which was not in sight. Most of them had no funds, and were begging on the streets. Everybody who had any money was sitting on it with a gun in each hand. With ten thousand beggars on the streets and the coldest weather of the winter biting through bone and marrow, and a ravenous hunger turning the ordinary docile man into little better than a brute, and with thousands of such at large, there is small wonder

that people felt apprehensive. The bakers dared not bake for a day ahead for fear their shops would be broken open and looted, which indeed was happening every day. The Jews, who comprise nearly a quarter of the population, were "squeezing" everybody that came into their clutches and constantly fomenting trouble on the outside. It was probable that any day a mere street brawl might in a moment turn into a massacre, and these Russian massacres mean the unleashing of every element of evil which the town contains. The news that came in from the agrarian districts was increasingly serious, and everyone was guessing as to what the outcome would be. The reports that came in indicated that all over Russia, sometimes peaceably and sometimes with violence, the peasants were taking the land into their own hands. Stories of burning estates and fleeing land owners circulated in every quarter. The question that everyone was asking was if the peasants ever take the land, who will ever take it away from them. Surely the army, that was manifestly sullen and discontented and trusted by no one, could not be looked to for performing such a task. As a matter of fact, people generally felt that the soldiers in time of trouble are more to be feared than any other element in the community. The Czar had just issued his latest manifesto increasing the pay and the standard of living of his army, but the effect was about the same as that of turning up the

wick of a lamp when the oil is gone. There was a momentary flare and then less light than ever before. The soldiers and everyone else viewed it at best as a confession of weakness wrung from the sovereign by his realization of his own desperate plight. Anyway, not even the most optimistic soldier believed that he would ever get the promised raise of pay. Patrols of the forbidding looking Cossacks were riding about the streets from morning until night. The plodding of their horses' hoofs in the snow and the metallic jingle of sabers, were almost the only sound one heard in the streets. All else was quiet as the grave, and save for the shivering and destitute begging from house to house, there was almost no one else abroad in this bitter cold.

Considering our high hopes for a general uprising the day passed quietly enough. Only a bomb episode along in the afternoon testified that the spirit of anarchy and revolution still smoldered beneath the surface. Not much of an event it was, even at that. Only an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate one of the local tyrants of the detective force. It would make a scare head for a local police story perhaps, but out here for the man who had the only access to the world's cable, it was only a "significant incident." The immediate scene is dramatic, terrible. A cold gray court-yard rises beyond a gate, at which stood a half frozen sentinel, gloomy, imperturbable, silent. Across the court was the office of

the victim sought. Within the compound a half dozen bodies, now torn and mangled, masses of clothing and human flesh, lie steaming in the cold, while pools of blood freeze in little lakes of red stained snow. The frost-bitten earth crunches dryly under the feet of the clumsy officers, who, note-books in hand, are compiling their reports of the incident. One of them turns over with his heavy boot the stiffening carcass of the perpetrator of the outrage, himself torn to shreds by the explosion of his own bomb. With white teeth clinched, and glassy eyes glaring up to the gloomy December sky, he lies, soaked in his own blood, amidst the wreckage he has created, a grim evidence that no tyrant is safe in a country where there are dozens willing and eager to sacrifice their own lives to remove even one of the cogs of the vast engine of despotism, the machine that has been grinding them smaller and smaller during these many centuries. No wonder the prefect of police turns his heavy visage from the scene in which he was cast to play such an important rôle. He is putty colored beneath his beard as he passes to his carriage, saber dragging in the snow and spurs ringing sharply on the threshold of the great gate. The dull sentry hears the sound and comes to a present. The police officers salute. The prefect climbs into his sleigh, weighted down with rich furs, the driver cracks his whip, and they are off up the street at a gallop. He has escaped this bomb,

but how about the next, and yet again the one to follow that? Perhaps he is thinking what will be the ultimate end, as he is driven away through the softly falling snow.

The uninitiated, no doubt, view with skepticism the accuracy of quickly gathered news, and perhaps think that a few days on the situation is a ridiculously short time in which a man can gather any definite information. This is in a measure true. There are times where weeks of study are essential, but these are not the stories a special war correspondent is after. Where he is in demand is on the spot where there is a "visible" situation. When things quiet down he usually withdraws, and the political and economic correspondents send the more analytical and perhaps profounder stuff. But these men in a riot, disaster or "emergency" are often lost in the shuffle, and here it is where the war correspondent can often cut in and beat by days the men who have been on the spot gathering routine political news for years. Unimpeded by long association the special man sees at a glance the most picturesque and prominent features. Trained as he must be to quick action, and methods of getting out his copy, his reports are often days ahead of the resident correspondent.

The first thing for a "story" is a general view of the situation. Two hours divided among the consulates and embassies of America, Great Britain, France and Germany give the general

official idea, which is always conservative. Next a round of the newspaper offices and one gets the (sensational) radical impressions. If there is anything big one can always find a half dozen war correspondents in the bar of the biggest and best hotel in town. From them one gets the sensational and spectacular elements and an unlimited amount of exaggeration. Three hours' driving about town with an interpreter interviewing and talking with everybody available, from the man loafing on the corner to the prefect of police, gives the local color and atmosphere for your cable. Late in the afternoon a man has in his head a mass of material ranging from the most lurid stories of the correspondents to the "official protests" that "all is well and no further trouble anticipated." The rest is merely a matter of perspective. As he writes, the correspondent must weigh the sources of his information and estimate their probable accuracy. Experience and many previous failures, and a sort of sixth sense, acquired perhaps in work on a local paper, render quick and almost subconscious judgments on news values more accurate than the uninitiated might imagine. It is at this point that a man's work ruins him with his office, or he makes good. The editor is not asking for literature, but for a quick survey of the situation. So it is that the man who can talk with the most people in the shortest time, and from such evidence make a connected and truthful story, is the man that is

wanted. From the combined conversations of perhaps forty informants, ranging through all classes in the community, he must pick and choose the salient features and the most reliable evidence on which to base his story. In ten hours a good newspaper man can get the material for a column cable on almost any "visible situation." This in the main will be accurate and correct. The moment he has gotten his message off, he begins to sketch out his campaign for the coming days or weeks which he expects the trouble to last. He picks out a half dozen reliable agents and sends them all over town, interviewing, observing, collecting data and local color in all quarters. If he knows his business he has a small but efficient staff in forty-eight hours, which keep him posted as to the general trend of affairs all over the city. If the wires are working, he can probably pick up local informants in neighboring towns to reinforce his story with ideas and viewpoints. If there is fighting going on he tries to see it without too much risk, so as to get the "local color," which only presence on the scene can give. The dull days are filled in by interviews with as many prominent people as can be induced to talk. Thus, what seems to an outsider as a difficult proposition and one involving guesswork and inaccuracy, becomes a very simple matter.

It was in much this way that I gathered material for my Odessa cable. I had not time to collect a local staff, for I only remained thirty-

six hours, but I made out fairly well on the collection of local information by turning Morris and three or four members of my crew loose for the day to talk with everyone possible. My dispatches to the consulate gave me quick and easy access to the official view, while a number of stranded war correspondents at the hotel regaled me with information, which they could not get out themselves on account of the telegraph and postal tie-up all over Russia. One rarely drops on a good situation without meeting a handful of old friends on similar business bent. In Odessa almost the first man I met ashore was Lionel James of the London *Times*, in my opinion the best of all the English cable correspondents. He had been in command of the *Times* dispatch boat *Haimun* in the Russo-Japanese war, and for months had been competing in the news zone against the dispatch boat I was operating for the Chicago *Daily News*. I first met him in Chefoo Harbor and again in Ping Yang Inlet in Korea. He joined the second army and scored a beat on the cable from Lioa Yang, which broke the Japanese securities in the London money market. I lost track of him and did not see him again until Red Sunday days in Petersburg. I was hurried up from a little investigation of a war scare in the Balkans and almost the first man I met in the hotel in Petersburg was James. For a few weeks I saw him daily, and again we parted. He had been on half a

dozen assignments and I around the world when we met on the street in Odessa that cold December day.

By six that night I had my evidence all in and was aboard the *France* ready for the run to the uncensored cable in Roumania.

CHAPTER VII

The France Does Her Best in the Run for the Uncensored Cable, Sticks in the Mud, but Gets Away and Arrives at Sulina Mouth with an Hour to Spare

Every line of enterprise is subject to disappointment and the newspaper business is no exception. I arrived on board the *France* with my mind picturing an eight-hour drive for the Roumanian cable, and my story in print in the afternoon edition of my paper the next day.

"All right," I called from the rowboat as soon as I was in hearing distance of the *France*. "Get up the anchor—let her go," but the only reply I had as I climbed over the side of my ocean-going greyhound of a tug was the sad face of old man Gileti and a series of deprecating shrugs and gestures accompanied by a line of guttural explanations in Greek. Nothing is more exasperating than delays on a cable story, and the language that floated over the expanse of Odessa harbor when I finally learned what my skipper had to say was certainly a disgrace, even for a journalist. In a word, the old Greek had failed to get the *France* port clearance, which meant that we could not get away until the next

day, and that my precious "beat" must be delayed at least 24 hours.

The whys and the wherefores were transmitted later by Morris, who spent an hour in getting the facts from the slow-witted old Greek. My chief of staff, secretary and steward was filled with disgust and had spent a half hour outlining through an interpreter to the wretched captain the enormity of his crimes.

"Yes, sir," he told me, "I have surely made old man Gileti sit up. I have put him wise to the fact that for a sure-enough dub and promiscuous fat-head, he has the rest of the world beat, yes sir, beat, backed into a siding with the switch locked. In fact, I regard that man, sir, as dead slow; yes, sir, slow, paralyzed in fact," etc.

Just how all these things had been translated I did not ask, but I did ask why the man had failed to get the shipping papers, without which we could not go to sea. When a skipper enters a port, he takes his papers ashore and leaves them with the authorities until sailing time, when an official brings them off and gives clearance of the harbor. If a ship sails without its papers, it loses all caste and is liable to confiscation by any warship that might get wind of the fact. Hence the necessity of the delay.

"The old man, sir," Morris continued, "was stalled. How? Yes sir, by some old Roosian! These dogs (meaning Greeks) are easy bluffed. Old man Gileti goes ashore this morning as di-

rected. He sits for some hours on a bench. Along comes a guy in rich uniform and sees the old man with our papers in his mit. Gileti hands over and then sits some more. Finally another general or something comes along and gives him a bum steer that the stuff's off and its back to the ship with him, bein' as it's a holiday and too much trouble to do business. The old man hollers a little, but bein' a fool and using Greek when it ain't getting through none, he fails to score, and next he knows he is showed out of the office by one of those Cossack fellers that has a bayonet on his gun. Quick as he's out they locks up and goes home, and there ain't nothing doing for Gileti, so he comes aboard."

The next morning early I had a kindly interview with the Greek, and sent him off again for his papers, with two men to interpret and my Black Prince to see that the goods were delivered. But even this formidable array found Russian officialdom a hard proposition to get quick action out of. Eight hours of red tape, bluffs and counter bluffs, persuasion, threats and pleadings, it took before the business was completed, and it was five in the afternoon when I saw the official launch with Morris and the Greeks sitting in the stern, coming out to us.

"Have got. Can do," yelled the steward when he was in ear-shot. This time there was no delay, and as soon as the skipper was on deck the forward donkey engine was spitting the water out

of the valves, and a moment later dragging in the anchor, and a delightful sound it was to hear it coming in over the windlass, link after link. Clang! Clang! Clang! rang the telegraph and the dial registered, "Stand by" in the engine room.

Old man Gileti was slow usually, but with an anxious correspondent at his elbow to "jack him up," he moved fast this time. No sooner did the rusty anchor head come dripping out of the water than "slow ahead" rang in the engine room. Black smoke pouring out of the two red funnels and the rattle of coal from the stoke-hold testified that the Turkish firemen were working for once in their lazy lives. "Hard aport" went the wheel, and the *France* swung her nose toward the open sea. "Steady," and she straightened out for her course. "Half speed" and then "Full speed ahead," read the dial down where the engines were picking up their sea-pace at every stroke. Two minutes later we were outside the breakwater, dipping our sturdy little nose into the chop of that wretched Euxine. "South by west a quarter west," the skipper called in Greek, and the man at the wheel spun the helm until the compass checked the course, and the *France* stiffened down for the 90 mile run to Sulina, where the Roumanian cable to the outside world lay awaiting us.

Once on our course I went below and had my dinner served royally in the saloon with Stomati

presiding over the cuts in the galley and Monroe D. talking like a windmill and "standing by" with the service.

"Yes, sir. Fine business, sir. We are making 12 knots, sir, and we are about to pull off an immense cup (no doubt intended for coup) on the situation. Yes, sir, I regard this trip as one of the great events in the history of journalism. I assure you I do, sir, yes, sir. I have just told Stomati that I regard this as one of the great achievements of our career and Stomati, sir, he was impressed. I could see it, sir, Stomati was dead to rights. I told that man, sir, that we had all the rest of the men in our profession looking like two-spots," a pause for wind, and then—"In my opinion, sir, old man O'Conor (referring to the British Ambassador) will be delighted. His important dispatches have been delivered. Yes, sir, delivered; in fact, placed in the hands of his Britannic majesty's consul at Odessa, and, sir, I must say I do say that I regard this as a most important act. Yes, sir, most important. I have told Stomati so, and, sir, Stomati agreed, for he told Spero and Spero, sir, he feels awe, sir, yes, I assure you he does, awe, that he is a member of this important expedition. Spero, sir, is a slow man and a heavy thinker, but when Stomati explained, I could see that Spero understood and appreciated. (Yes, sir, I will pass you another cut.) But as I was saying, it is my opinion that the British gov-

ernment will decorate us—yes, sir, handsomely. No doubt the Victoria Cross will—"

But here I cut him off, having finished my dinner and a cigar besides, and sent him to the galley to get his own meal, and more important, to give me an opportunity to write my story. During the delay of the day, I had examined every member of the crew that had been ashore, to gather any additional data for my cable. This with the mass of material picked up the day before, gave me enough for a column message, which I proceeded to rap out on my machine. People generally seem to think that newspaper stories must be in cipher, for few of the uninitiated realize that a thousand dollars on cable toll for a single dispatch is nothing unusual. The writing of a cable differs only from a written article in that one cuts local color and descriptive matter a bit in favor of facts. By force of habit, a cable arranges itself in one's mind unconsciously and can be written as fast as one can work a machine. Then there only remains to read over the copy and blue pencil all superfluous "thes," "ands," adjectives, and everything in fact that the foreign editor in the office can supply by the study of the context. Thus a 2000 word story will "skeletonize" to perhaps 1200 and be re-expanded in the office to 2500. The office files contain vast stores of information. If a name or place is mentioned, it is looked up and its significance or location incorporated into the

cable as printed. The result is a detailed story and an accurate one as far as the editorial half is concerned. It took me a half hour to write my story and another fifteen minutes to "skeletonize" and re-copy it ready for the telegraph office. It came to 895 words.

When I had finished, I sent for the chief engineer. It was now ten o'clock in the evening, and I must get my cable off surely by daylight to insure its getting the edition. We had a heavy head sea and in spite of Morris' assertion of 12 knots, we weren't doing much over 8½. We needed all we had, and so I wanted to talk with the man who had charge of the turns of the propellor. I wanted to imbue in him the news idea and the news spirit which, once aroused, are stronger forces for speed and quick action than unlimited golden promises. So when he came in, I gave him a cigar and then for an hour I labored with him, pouring out all the eloquence which the love of the work must always bring from the lips of any true newspaper man who works neither for money, reputation or glory, but for the fascination of "THE CABLE GAME" which knows not the limitations of conventions, and is bounded only by time and space. Any man can talk on the one subject that lies nearest his heart, and it is a poor newspaper man indeed who cannot wax eloquent over the "cable game." He lives it every waking hour of the day and dreams of it when he sleeps. It is for no material gain which

he labors, but the pure love of the work itself. There are dozens of such men who suffer untold hardships and face any risk simply to get their stories out. They care little whether their names are signed or not, and their one aim is that their paper shall be the first to have the news, and that their version of it may have the front page wherever newspapers are published. It may be the depths of winter, and miles away from a cable office, but he will gladly ride hours in a driving snowstorm, even if it takes his last breath to get his story on the wire. Perhaps it is summer in the tropics, but he faces the heat as readily as the cold of winter. Hunger and hardships of all kinds are a part of the day's work to him if he can but land that priceless "story," which is the only object of his life from day to day. Few people who read the daily papers dream of the suffering and heart-burn that "special cables" have cost some man in some far corner of the globe. The story which they read complacently at their breakfast table has often all but cost the sender his life in getting it to the telegraph, but the correspondent does it and counts the cost as nothing if he gets his "beat." From the world he looks for no recognition, and if his chief at home is satisfied, the cable-man rejoices and his heart is glad.

All of this I told my nervous little Greek engineer and then pointed out that now he as well as I was a correspondent, and not only he, but

every man on the boat was one. "I can do nothing alone," I told him. "It is only by your cooperation that we can make this expedition a success, yours and every other member of this crew," and then I explained to him the value of time. How that minutes were worth dollars and days thousands, and that an hour saved might mean the difference between success and failure.

"You have seen the situation in Odessa," I pointed out to him. "You know as well as I do that there are hundreds of foreigners, your countrymen and mine included, whose lives and property are insecure every day that this reign of terror lasts. They are praying for relief from their home govenments and there" (I pointed to my typewriter cable blanks on the table) "is the story of their plight, and their prayer for help. Ten hours after we reach Sulina, that story will be in print, and in 24 it will have been read by every foreign office in the world, and who can tell what will be the result? Next week this time there may be a fleet of warships plowing these waters at full speed to bring protection to every port in southern Russia. Have you ever been in peril and without protection? Have you ever longed and prayed for the sight of a battleship or cruiser flying a friendly flag? Have you watched the harbor mouth day in and day out for the smudge of smoke which may mean the coming of succor? Can you realize what bluejackets, machine guns and friends mean

to the people in Odessa? Realize it and you know what the value of minutes and, much more, hours may mean. Perhaps I understand it more than you possibly can, for training on an American paper makes a man consider time more than anything on earth. You people aboard don't know how the newspapers in America and in England, too, spend thousands to save minutes. Go to a big meeting in my country, and sit through two hours of speeches. When you leave the hall, a newsboy will hand you a paper with the ink still wet, with a complete account of the first hour and a half of what has gone on within."

The engineer was visibly impressed.

"I can't understand," he said, "how your paper can spend so much money for a month of news, much less for one story."

I laughed and told him of a correspondent in the far east who got to the cable office with a big story. He had barely time to catch the morning edition of his paper. He threw in his 1000 words of copy, and while he was waiting to see that it got off, he saw through the window the correspondent of his paper's greatest rival at home tearing madly toward the telegraph office with his story clutched in his hands. He looked at his watch and saw that his rival might send his cable after his own, and still get it published the same morning, thus preventing him from scoring a "beat." For a moment only he was paralyzed, and then he drew from his pocket

a novel which he had been reading. With one quick snatch he ripped out twenty pages, stuck his scarf pin through to hold them together, and in pencil scrawled across the top of the first page the name of his paper and signed his name on the last, and as his rival entered the door, he tossed to the operator what amounted to some 7000 additional words of copy. By the time the operator had finished sending this stuff it was just an hour too late for his rival's cable to get the morning edition. The result was that his story appeared in New York the next morning and was copied all over the world as the big "beat" of the year. To be sure, it cost the management nearly $5000 extra in cable tolls, but they alone got the story that morning.

"Did the correspondent lose his job?" gasped the chief.

"Not on your life," I told him. "On the contrary, he got a cable of congratulations on his quick action and a raise of salary the same day."

"Well, what do you think of that?" ejaculated the chief.

I saw I had him interested, and so while I was at it I gave him the story of how a newspaper man saved the Suez Canal to England. "In some way the correspondent of an English paper found that the Khedive of Egypt, who held the controlling interest in the stock of the canal, was going to sell out. In an instant the man realized that he held in his hand the biggest story of his

day. Were it published, every power in Europe would be bidding, and no doubt the French, who then had the greatest influence in Egypt, would carry off the plum, which was worth a dozen wars for any power to possess. So he held his tongue and sent a rush message, not to his paper, but to the premier of England. Old Palmerston saw the situation as quickly as had the newspaper man, and closed the deal by cable for $20,000,000, and then made parliament raise the cash. The result was that the newspaper account was the first notice that France had of the loss of the opportunity. So you see, chief, where hours and minutes were worth not thousands, but millions on one occasion."

I had his attention now, and so I threw in the local touch to round it off with.

"That's what time means to the outside world, but I have not told you how the office is crying for it. You see, now we have been out nearly a week, and my chief at home is getting anxious. I can see the foreign editor sitting at his desk to-morrow. For three days he has been expecting a cable from us. He locks up his forms about half past three, and after that our cable will be too late. He is expecting something good, and for two days now he has been holding space for us on the 'front page' up to the last moment. Every day that three o'clock comes and no news from us, he is sick with disgust. Now, chief, if we can get to Sulina by daybreak,

we will give him his story, our story, and the story of what Odessa is suffering. That cable there will come in to his desk in four or five sheets about five minutes apart. When he sees the date and first sentence, he will know it is from us, and before the end has been received, the first pages will be in type, and in fifteen minutes after he has O. K.'d the last sentence, the great presses in the basement of the building will be roaring worse than one of your Black Sea hurricanes, and the neatly folded papers will be coming out at the rate of 60,000 an hour, and before we are through coaling in Sulina to-morrow afternoon, every newsboy in Chicago will be crying, 'Extra, latest news from Russia; all about Odessa,' and our story will be speeding east, west, south and north to a hundred different cities."

I could see that my little Greek friend was getting enthusiastic. I took my dispatch lovingly in my hands and fingered it for a moment, and then "I have done all I can do, chief. It is up to you, now, whether we print this cable to-morrow or two days from now."

He jumped up from the table and seized his hat.

"What do you want me to do?" he asked, filled with the spirit of the game.

"I want speed, all that you can get down there below the grating."

Without a word he turned and climbed the companion-way. I heard his quick step on deck

above my head, and he was gone. A few minutes later I followed him and went down into the engine room. By the throttle stood my little friend, with one hand on the valve gear and his eye on the steam gauge. I put my hand on the eccentric arc of the high pressure engine and, with my watch in hand, counted the heartbeats of our 1000 horse power triples.

"One hundred and eight revolutions," I said. "Not bad."

The chief never took his eye from the gauge.

"You watch. We can do better than that."

In the stoke-hold just ahead I could hear the Turks heaving in the coal, and I was glad at heart.

"You've got those fellows working for once," I commented.

"I have that," he replied. "I've woke up the day shift and have two men working on each boiler, and the gauge there tells the business."

I followed his eye and watched the hand flicker with each stroke of the engine. Pound by pound the pressure from the boilers was shoving it up. When it reached 160, the chief gave the wheel that opens the valve in the main steam pipe from the boilers a half turn and said:

"Now count her revolutions."

With my eye on the second hand of my watch, I counted "105, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12," and snapped the lid with approbation.

"We've more coming yet," grinned the sturdy little Greek.

His interest once aroused, he was doing his best. A moment later I counted 115.

"She did 117 on her trial trip," volunteered the engineer, "and she'll do it again if she holds together," and he opened the valve to its full and screwed in the valve gear until he had the steam cut off to its minimum stroke to keep pace with the up and down racing of the pistons, while his second crawled about dropping oil in cupfuls on the working bearings to keep her from heating. The chief timed her himself. I watched him.

"What is she doing?" I asked, as he closed his watch.

"You count," he said.

"I make it 118," I replied, looking at him with my best smile of approval.

"Right you are," he said. "One hundred and eighteen it is, and just one better than she's ever done before," and he winked as he rubbed the oil off his grimy face with a piece of cotton waste.

"I'd put her up some more," he said apologetically, "but I'm afraid she'd prime. Anyhow," (with a glance at the gauge) "she blows at 180 pounds, and we're 178 now."

"Keep her where she is," I said, "and you're doing fine." And I wrung his hand and went on deck.

Trembling from end to end with the revolu-

tion of her engines, the *France* was beating her way toward the cable at nearly 11 knots an hour, and going into a heavy head sea at that. I blessed the sporty little Greek and went below to try and get a bit of shut-eye before daylight.

In the saloon I found Morris and the second engineer, who had just turned out of his bunk preparatory to going on his watch in the engine room at 1 A. M. With one shoe on and the other in his hand he sat spell-bound as he listened to the narration of one of Morris's hair-raising Philippine experiences. I had intended turning in at once, but lighted a cigar instead for a chat with the machinist for the few minutes he had to spare.

Our conversation naturally drifted to the subject which we both had in common, and before we knew it we were deep in a discussion as to the respective merits of turbine and reciprocating engines. The engineer was still nursing his unshod foot, forgetful of all but the question we were arguing.

"For my part," he was saying, "give me for all around service triple expansion—I don't say but what for high speed like torpedo boats and such, turbines may not be good, but they do say the blades sheer in bucketsful at high pressure driving. Now you take a four-cylinder triple turning her darndest—"

He paused suddenly and looked sharply at me. We had both felt a barely perceptible tremor

run through the ship. A tumult of anger swept through my veins.

"She touched bottom," I explained, furious at even the prospect of a further delay in getting my story to the cable.

"That's funny," mused the engineer, slipping on the belated boot in a hurry. "It surely felt like sliding over a mud bank. We must be ten miles from shore at least. But it can't be, for the old man hasn't even slowed her down. We must have dreamed it."

"Nothing of the sort," I replied, having been there many times before. "We are too near the shore, and the skipper's either drunk or asleep. I am going on deck," and I got up and put on my coat and started for the stairs.

I had barely put my foot on the bottom step when we felt the sudden check to our speed and that subtle velvety sensation of a ship sliding through mud. I turned and looked at the engineer, who was at my heels.

"The fool," he muttered, and then a lot of Greek expletives which sounded good to me. "He's piled her up on the mud-bank."

And even as he spoke there came the frantic clanging of the telegraph in the engine room, and almost instantly the dying pulse of the engines as the chief engineer shut off the steam. The pistons had been slipping merrily up and down in their guides driving the shaft at its maximum, and for a few strokes their impetus car-

ried them, but the life was gone, and after a few half-hearted revolutions they came to a sullen stand-still, the high pressure engine just at the end of its reach and the low caught in the middle of its stroke. The absolute silence was broken only by the lap of the waves breaking on our steel sides. In a moment I was on the bridge with Morris at my heels. A tumult of Greek voices in the wheel-house told of the endeavors to adjust the responsibility of the blunder. It is always so with the Greeks. In an emergency they all begin to quarrel as to who is to blame. So it was at this juncture, and until I had Stomati translating some strong Anglo-Saxon language, the idea of how we were going to get afloat again did not seem to have crossed any one's mind. They all united in condemning Spero as the simplest way out of the matter, and let it go at that.

It was almost full moon. The wind had gone down, and for once the sea was as calm as a lake. Four or five miles away, dead ahead, a light glimmered, and with my night glasses I could see the outline of the low lying shore against the sky. It was way below zero—a dead, cold calm, the sort of cold that hurts one's lungs to breathe.

As we stood arguing on the bridge the safety valves on the starboard boilers lifted and the steam deflected from the engines came roaring out of the steam pipe aft the funnel, going

straight up into the cold air in great expanding clouds of fleece.

Old man Gileti rang full-speed astern and eagerly the three cylinders breathed again as they took up their triple chorus down in the engine room. For an hour they worked, first ahead and then astern in a frantic effort to slip her out of the bank. But it was no use. We had been driving at nearly fourteen knots and had gone head-first into a wet and sticky bank of mud, and her nose was buried three feet deep in the clinging mess.

I got the chief down into my saloon as being the only rational man aboard, and together we studied out our position on the chart. We were some 15 miles north of the Danube's mouth and four miles off shore. The skipper had mistaken a light in a house for the harbor light, and had turned in for the shore just an hour too soon. The names we devised to apply to that skipper would have frozen his marrow could they have been translated. The little engineer had been moving heaven and earth to give me speed, and he almost wept at the delay. I told him that I must be at the cable office by seven in the morning, and to pass the word forward to the crew that if they did not get her off by three o'clock I should lower the boat and take four men to pull me to the shore. The idea of a four-mile sea-pull with the mercury freezing put more life into

the crew than I could have believed possible. I told Morris that he would have to go, too, and his teeth chattered in anticipation as he flew forward to Stomati to get him to urge the crew into action.

The skipper, who was really much depressed, held a council of war, and things began to move. The boat was swung clear of the davits, while Spero and another got away the port anchor. This was lowered gingerly into the life-boat, and then, with four men straining at the oars, it was pulled with the cable paying slowly out, 80 fathoms astern. I stood aft-side the *France* shivering in the moonlight, and watched them gently pry the seven-hundred pound anchor out of the swaying life-boat and heard the splash of it as it went into the water. Then the donkey engine with Nicholas at the valve began to take in the cable, and link by link it came out of the water, until at last it stretched taut from the forward hawser hole to the anchor that bit the mud 500 feet astern.

"Full speed astern," rang the order in the engine room, and the propeller churned the mud. Nicholas threw the donkey valve wide, and with desperate pantings and gaspings the windlass tugged at the cable. Inch by inch almost imperceptibly it came in. For a minute or two the struggle of steam *vs.* mud continued, and then suddenly the donkey, choking with delight, began to gather in the cable with metallic rattlings,

and the crew cheered lustily as the *France* slid back into the arms of her native element.

In five minutes we had the boat on the davits again and the anchor on deck, and were beating down the coast. At five, a bend in the coast showed the white glimmer of the Sulina beacon, and we cut her speed down to a few knots, for our haven was in sight. Two hours later we crossed the bar and steamed into the Danube, and I went below for the hour that remained before daylight.

CHAPTER VIII

We Send Our Cable and Find Ourselves with Five Francs and Expenses of $200 a Day, but Make a Financial Coup d'Etat and Sail for the Crimean Peninsula

The Danube, some twenty miles before it reaches the sea, spreads out in an enormous delta and empties into the Euxine through three mouths, St. George's to the south, Sulina mouth in the middle and Rilia to the north. The Sulina being the main artery of navigation was the one that interested us. Its channel has been cut in a straight line for perhaps eight miles from the sea, so that it looks more like a great canal than a river. Two breakwaters jut out for half a mile beyond the mouth to keep the silt brought down by the great volume of water from spreading out in a bar at the entrance of the channel. Two enormous steam dredges live between these breakwaters and spend their entire time in keeping the channel deep. The country all around the mouth is flat and swampy, and the little town is built on made ground, and, like Port Said and Suez, lives off the shipping that passes to and fro in the river. Until I saw Sulina on the map as the nearest cable station to Odessa, I had never heard

of it, and was amazed to find it one of the big grain shipping centers of Europe. Many of the large steamers tie up there and load from elevators and barges. Roumania, it appears, is one of the most Utopian little states in Europe. The people are the left-overs of the high tide of the Roman Empire. When the centuries were countable on the fingers of one hand, the Romans settled the country. When the Vandals swept down on Rome, the arms of her prestige curled in like the tentacles of an anemone, leaving this little isolated community to struggle down through the storms of history. Though a thousand miles separates this little lake of Romans from the spring that poured them at its flood, the community grew and waxed strong and held itself intact in the furnace of turmoil and clash of medieval history. Roumania to-day is about the size of New York State. The Danube, her great artery, waters a plain as fertile as any in the world. Each year from seventy-five to a hundred million bushels of grain come down that river for shipment to the outer world.

Sulina town is a handful of houses stretching along the river. Dozens of steamers lie alongside the stone embankment receiving their cargoes. Floating elevators, shrouded in the mist of their own dust, shoot the torrents of golden grain into the hatches that gape expectantly in the decks of the great sea-tramps.

Though it was December and the weather freez-

ing, the embankment for a mile was lined with great freight-carriers, while tugboats towing long lines of wheat barges that had come from Hungary snorted down the aisle of dignified ocean carriers, whose funnels towered fifty feet above the waters.

The *France*, with the "stars and stripes" snapping in the crisp morning breeze, steamed up the busy lane, and after passing the quarantine officer, was assigned to a berth on the outskirts of the town. A cup of coffee in the galley served for breakfast, and then with Spero, Stomati and Morris in the boat, I was pulled across the river to the side where the cable office was reported to be.

It was half past seven, and the town was just beginning to stir itself as my boat came alongside the stone steps of one of the many landing places. With Stomati as a pilot, I found the cable office where a sleepy individual in uniform was lounging over a table on which a dozen instruments were merrily clicking. We looked in through a little grated window and Stomati (in what I suspect was very inferior Roumanian) stated that we were not looking through the grating out of curiosity, but because we had a message to send. The operator stretched and shuffled forward, and I handed in my three pages of typewritten cable blanks. He glanced at it and shoved it back with the observation that the post-office was across the hall, and started back to his

desk. When he finally heard it was a cable for London, he scuttled out of the room, and in a few minutes came back with two more operators, and a fierce argument ensued. At last the one who seemed to be the head, came over with a pitying smile and handed back the cable with the comment that I better mail it, as it would cost 75 cents a word to cable it, and he turned to go back to his breakfast. When I insisted he stared in amazement, but took the message. I produced my five £5 notes, which were declined as not being legal tender, and my message was handed back. Stomati argued and swore, and I offered my watch as security, but no; "pay in Roumanian bills or there shall be no cable sent." The banks did not open till ten, which would delay my wire two hours, and perhaps lose the afternoon edition. Stomati turned his pockets inside out and unearthed 20 Roumanian gold pieces, which I confiscated and sent a short wire to London: "Hold space for thousand words Russia. Filing in hour." This to prepare the office so that if my wire arrived at the eleventh hour, there would be a place in the forms all ready to slip it in. Having got this off, I started out with my five English notes to get a quick action change to Roumanian coin of the realm.

Now, as stated above, there is nothing at Sulina save its shipping interests. In a village, any new event creates a great sensation. So it was with the advent of the *France* with the Amer-

ican flag flying at the fore. When we returned to the embankment, little knots of Roumanians were discussing what her significance was. Every group we met was bombarded by Stomati in his alleged Roumanian to change English bank notes to Roumanian francs. We found an individual in the second group who had a little over a hundred francs. He got one of my £5 notes, and I all his spare change, which Morris took on a run to the cable office to send as much of my message as it would pay for. In the meantime the inhabitants began to get interested in my cable, and everyone in the little crowd had suggestions to make, and two or three raced off to wake up possible takers of English notes. I had tried a half dozen shops all in vain when I heard a hurried step on the pavement, and the knot of newly made friends exclaimed with joy as a half dressed individual, flushing with his own importance, pushed his way through the crowd, and, with a dramatic attitude and heroic tones, said in fairly good English,

"It is I, so-and-so (I forget his name), the banker. I have heard of monsieur's intended arrival—Sulina knows of him. I will change his money. Come quick to my office."

The crowd was enormously impressed. I have often wondered what they supposed my cable to contain. A message from the Czar to the President certainly could not have made a greater

excitement. With Stomati and that portion of the town that was awake and had nothing else on its mind, I repaired to the banker's shop and got my notes into golden francs. I hate to think of the exchange I paid, but I needed the coin and gathered it in and started for the cable office, where I found Morris trying to talk French to the operators, whose entire attention was now devoted to my 900 word cable. Such a thing had never happened there before, and they were chattering like magpies, but would not send a word until it was all paid for. So I counted out my gold and the head man started on the message. I watched him until the last word was on the wire, and then took account of stock.

I was at Sulina Mouth without any further instructions from my office. The *France* was lying in the river at an expense of about 200 gold dollars a day. I counted my reserve and found it to come to 45 francs. I paid Stomati the 20 I had confiscated from him, and put the remaining 25 francs in my pocket with great care. Morris looked at me and grinned.

"Is that your last?" he asked.

"It is," I replied with great dignity, "but keep it dark. It is nobody's business but my own."

It did look rather blue. Just five dollars and a boat on my hands that was burning up a hundred a day in coal alone, and we at the end of the earth and the central object of interest in town.

Morris keenly enjoyed the delicateness of the situation. He was never so happy as when we were in a tight place.

"What are we going to do?" he queried, cracking the joints in his knuckles.

I looked at my watch. It was lacking five minutes of nine.

"Morris," I said, "we are going back to the *France* and have some breakfast." And I smiled serenely, for my cable had gone and we couldn't be robbed of that much, even if everything else went to the bad.

So we walked down to the embankment and I whistled for the ship's boat, and was soon in my saloon eating the best breakfast that Stomati could cook. There is nothing like a full stomach to give one courage and to make one's brain work up to the situation of the moment.

There is a good rule in whist (or some game of cards) that says "When in doubt, lead trumps." A good axiom for a war correspondent (or anyone else for that matter) in trouble would be "when in a desperate plight and all seems lost—eat, and then do your thinking." It is poor business worrying at best, and especially on an empty stomach. So I banished from my mind the delicacy of my situation and ate the most luxurious breakfast which the *France* afforded. When this duty was completed, I lighted a cigar, which I intended to smoke to the bitter end before I attempted that painful process of putting one's

mind through a wringer in an endeavor to make something out of nothing.

While the smoke from the first puff was floating out of the skylight, there came a tap at the companion-way hatch. I sent Morris to investigate. He returned clicking his heels and grinning from ear to ear.

"Here's your chance," he said. "It's a banker guy named Rodwaner. He is doing a stunt in bum English, from which I gather that here is where we make the grand touch."

Morris's English may have been ambiguous, but I translated it as it was for the benefit of the solving of problems in slang.

"What did you tell him?" I asked.

Morris grinned, cracked his thumb joints.

"Was I eager? Not on your life! I said, 'My boss is a very busy man; don't think he can see you at all to-day.' Well, the old man was some impressed. 'Yes,' he says, 'yes, I realize your master must be busy—but this is an important matter about a loan.' Well, sir, when he says loan, Monroe D. Morris makes his great stall. 'Loan! Do you think my master is borrowing money at every port and from an unknown party like yourself?' And then I gives him a line of talk and finally consents to getting him an interview for just a moment."

At my direction he produced the banker, who came in with many bowings and scrapings and apologies for his intrusion. As an introduction

he produced a telegram in German from the Branch Ottoman Bank at Budapest. I don't know to this day how the old man ever got it or whom it came from—it was garbled and parts left out. It seemed that Rodwaner was the local agent of the Roumanian National Bank and that someone had advised the Central Bank in Bucharest that I had credit at Constantinople, and that small drafts might be honored on presentation of proper credentials. I had no credentials to show my friend, so I side-stepped that question. He had received the message two days before and had told everyone in town. When the *France* arrived and was the center of observation, old Rodwaner began to swell up with pride and boast of his importance as being the man whom the Ottoman Bank had advised of my coming. It appeared later that he had been talking freely in town, and as his importance grew with the magnitude he gave me, he had not spared in his praises of the "great personage" to arrive, and whom he was to finance. He asked how much I wanted, and as a starter I said £100. He then asked for my credentials, and I was obliged to admit I had none. He looked at me aghast. What should he do? He could not return ashore and tell his friends that his long heralded arrival was a "fraud" to whom he would not advance money, and, on the other hand, the idea of giving a stranger money without anything but a sight draft as security

nearly threw him into spasms. It was his prestige with his neighbors ashore vs. risking his shekels, and it was a hard fight. But he was in the enemy's country, and the sight of the *France* and my crew and Morris standing at my elbow like an ebony statue, saluting every time I looked his way, made a great impression. I gave him some whiskey and a cigar, and told him what a genuine pleasure it was to meet a banker of such importance and business sagacity in a little town like Sulina. I outlined to him how much I appreciated his trust in me (which was an anticipation, to be sure), and I pointed out how really great men depended on their intuitions in business rather than conventional forms. He swallowed it all and two more drinks of whiskey besides. Fortunately he had the money on him, for I don't believe I would have gotten it so easily had we been obliged to attack him in his own lair. After the drink he began to loosen and at the third he drew a bag of gold out of his trousers pocket and counted out 100 gold pieces, being English sovereigns and German 20 mark gold pieces. I signed a receipt and filled my money belt on the spot before he could have a change of heart. I wanted twice as much, but I must be sure of something anyway, and I did not propose to risk it all by asking too much at the start. After Rodwaner had parted with his money he became very sad, but I cheered him up and about noon sent him ashore in the ship's boat with Morris

to break ground for an event which was to come off during the afternoon.

While the leaven was working ashore I pounded out a mail story and read over a batch of English papers which the banker had been thoughtful enough to bring aboard with him when he came. A glance through the papers, coupled with the gossip I had picked up ashore, indicated that the situation was about the same as when I had left Constantinople. The same crop of alarms and reports of disaster were circulating here as they had been at every point I had touched. Odessa, Sevastopol and the Caucasus generally named as being in the most desperate plights. I knew that Odessa, though in a bad way, might keep for a few weeks, but did not feel so sure of the other places. An interview with the skipper and a careful scrutiny of the chart determined me to go first to Sevastopol, which was only a night's run from the mouth of the Danube. From there I figured I could reach the coast of Asia Minor is another fourteen hours and get the Turkish cable for my story from the Crimean city, and then be within striking distance of the Caucasus if on closer view-point the situation looked good.

I called the engineer, and he admitted coal in bunkers to last five days. Stomati urged a replenishment of the larder, and I gave him some of my Rodwaner gold to get it, and then sent the skipper out to clear the ship for Sevastopol so

that we might be ready to sail by four in the afternoon.

In the meantime Morris was standing by the banker, saluting and exhibiting deference at every step. Rodwaner, with three drinks under his belt and an Ethiopian attendant, began to swell, and an hour after he had set foot on shore everyone in town was pointing him out as the only man in town whom outsiders knew and turned to for financial matters. The stories my banker circulated about his distinguished friend on the "yacht" simply made his rivals green with envy.

At three in the afternoon Morris returned and reported on Rodwaner's satisfaction and also on his own activity in boosting my credit ashore. The moment was now ripe for the second attack. So we got up our anchor and steamed majestically up the river and made directly in front of Rodwaner's minute establishment. With all flags flying and steam blowing off the *France* certainly made an excellent appearance. Quite a crowd gathered while we were tying up. With Morris clearing the way, I came down the gang-plank and entered the banker's shop. He met me at the door wreathed in smiles and ignoring absolutely his old friends that crowded about the door. I sat down and had some tea while the two clerks in the place gaped at me over their ledgers, and a score or more of faces peered through the front windows.

"Yes," old Rodwaner was saying, so loud that

a rival money lender in the front rank could take it in, "it has been a great pleasure to do business with you. I hope you will always call on me. I can always give you up to £1000."

I saw him trying to gather out of the corner of his eye the impression that he was making. Everything was working finely, even better than I had hoped.

"Yes, of course," I said. "That £100 I drew was indeed a trifle."

"Nothing at all," replied the banker. "A mere detail. A drop in the bucket. I might have done much better by you had you needed it," and he fairly hugged himself at the great coup he was making before the rest of the town.

A dozen had come in and stood listening to our conversation. It was now about four, and so I delivered my bomb which I had held until the psychological moment. So I said:

"I hesitated to ask for more, Mr. Rodwaner, as I did not suppose your institution was such an important one."

"Important? Yes," he replied, "though I say it myself, perhaps the most so in Roumania."

"That being the case," I replied easily, "I believe I'll have a little more, say £200," and I lighted a fresh cigar.

It was cruel to do it right before them all, but I needed the money, and quickly at that.

Rodwaner actually turned pale. One of the clerks, whom I learned was his son, burst forth in

German that, already this strange man had borrowed £100, with little or no security, and he objected. I could see that there was a row on, and I must confess that I was mean enough to enjoy it thoroughly.

The banker wavered for a second. What should he do? At this moment one of the bystanders, a Greek money-lender, called from the back of the crowd:

"I have the moneys for Monsieur if Rodwaner cannot do."

This turned the scale.

"Ha, Ha!" cried my friend. "You would steal my customers, you dirty pig. Rodwaner can lend—he will. He does so with pride," and he booted the protesting son into the corner and then proceeded to clear the shop. Then he breathed a sigh of relief. His local prestige was safe. How much did I need?

"Two hundred pounds would do."

Couldn't I do with less, perhaps. I thought I might be satisfied with £150, and he began to dig. It was evident he hadn't even that, and so I said we would make it a hundred flat. All his gold came only to £90.

"Will that do?" he asked appealingly.

"I'm afraid not," I replied, "but if it is going to inconvenience you, perhaps the Greek banker will."

He held up his hand more in sorrow than in anger, and asked if I could use silver. I agreed,

and he began to count it out into piles, first five franc pieces, then two franc and at last ones, and still he was short a few pounds. But he was thoroughly aroused now, and put on his hat and in a few minutes returned with sufficient gold to make up my £100, and I signed a sight draft on the Chicago *News*, shook him warmly by the hand and walked across the street to the *France*, that lay almost at his door.

Without any exaggeration, there were three or four hundred people crowding about the gangway. Morris had hurried ahead, and had Stomati and two of the crew on deck to salute as I came aboard through a narrow lane of humanity. In two minutes we had cast off and our engines were slowly pulling the *France*, stern first, into the stream. As her head came slowly around, and her nose pointed seaward, Morris dipped the flag on account of our poor old Rodwaner left with his empty purse.

"What interests me," I told Morris that night, as I sat smoking after my dinner, "is where the old man got the balance of that gold."

"He sure was up against it," replied my chief of staff. "Yes, sir, old man Rodwaner had to scratch. It's my opinion, sir, that old man Rodwaner is all in."

"How's that?" I asked.

"You took all he had and then he puts on his hat and goes and pawns Rachel's sealskin sacque and diamonds, and that, sir, is where your last £5

came from. Yes, sir, I believe it. That's just what old man Rodwaner done."

With $1000 gold in my belt, we shaped our course for the Crimea.

CHAPTER IX

We Reach Sevastopol and Land in Spite of Harbor Regulations, Get a Story and Sail Away with It to the Coast of Asia Minor

The reader of stories of adventure naturally expects to have something sensational doing every minute. Why else, indeed, has he paid his money? But there are dull spots in even the most strenuous tales (that is, in real life), and the narrator of fact must blushingly, or, at best, hurry over the places where interest flags. Our trip from the Danube mouth to the Crimean Peninsula was unusual only in the fact that the sea was quiet, and that it was possible to remain in one's bunk. No world diplomat ever felt more perfect satisfaction at a successfully executed international coup d'état than I did that night as, with money belts stuffed with gold, the *France* cut through the waves, turning up with her steel nose a ridge of ripples that left an ever wider wedge of silver in our moonlit wake. A square meal and a good cigar combined to make that evening a picture, which still stands out in my mind as an oasis in the desert of that Black Sea trip. At ten o'clock I took a "look-see" around the boat before turning in for the night,

and found that every member of the crew, save the man at the wheel, had crawled off into some corner and gone to sleep. Even the look-out had squeezed himself into the chain-locker out of the wind, and was making a sound like the exhaust of a gasoline launch. For a few minutes I was tempted to wake up the various delinquents, but when I thought of the past days and nights of cold and overwork, I softened and let them sleep peacefully on. The only danger on such a smooth sea that I could think of was collision, and that seemed improbable, as there were almost no ships navigating those waters just at that time, and, anyway, surely the other ship would keep watch and see us, even if we failed to see them. So we would be safe anyway. One comes to realize after a time that it is foolish to worry about dangers all the time. After months of being on needles and pins as to what the future has up its sleeve, one gets so tired that it is simpler to accept the inevitable and be killed outright (if so it is written on the cards) than to lay awake nights and think about it. So leaving the situation on "the lap of the gods," I went to my cabin and rolled into my bunk without the formality of undressing, and in two seconds was sleeping with that indifference to fate and the morrow that only hardship, exposure and utter exhaustion can make possible.

The situation at Sevastopol, according to the rumors that had been circulating in the ports at

which I had touched, were all that the most bloodthirsty correspondent could desire. The mutiny of the Black Sea fleet was but a recent history, and as no word had come from the Crimea for some weeks, it was generally supposed that further riot and bloodshed had been added to the long list of upheavals which had marked that year in the Czar's dominions. So it was with keen interest that we stood on the bridge of the *France* the following morning and watched the white line of the snow-clad, low lying hills come out of the sea as we approached the barren bleakness of the historic battlefields of '55.

We entered the harbor without molestation and anchored a few hundred yards from half a dozen sullen looking ships of war, which completed the dismal setting of the whole scene. We waited an hour or more, as usual in Russian ports, without our presence being noted in the slightest degree. Finally about nine o'clock a launch with a bevy of hungry waiting-to-be-fed port officials came aboard. Nothing could be done until a hot breakfast was placed before them. Then a few drinks and cigars warmed their hearts sufficiently so that they consented to commence the endless examination into our past, which forms such an important part of Russian procedure. About eleven they took their departure, with the instructions to us that we would not be allowed to land until our case had been carefully considered by those in authority

ashore. This was most discouraging to one in a hurry to do business, and who had not the slightest intention of being left over night in the harbor. We watched the launch steam back to shore, and when it had finally disappeared behind some docks, and when, with my glasses, I had observed the portly officials walk off up a near by street, I ordered out my own long boat. Fortunately this hung on the side away from the harbor. Taking four of the best rowers and the faithful Morris, we pulled quietly away from the *France*, and, without further discussion, rowed around behind a bluff that sloped down to the water, in a little frequented part of the town, and without once being hailed, landed, climbed over said bluff, and walked boldly down into the main street of the town, just as though we lived there.

I made my base at the best hotel in the city and proceeded to pump everyone in sight as to the news of the hour in the Crimean port. Four hours of active work convinced me that the situation in Sevastopol had been vastly exaggerated, as indeed is usually the case with war or riot stories originating in remote localities. To the excited citizen caught in the hurly burly uproar and tumult of a mob, with shots ringing out and Cossacks charging about and riding people down, it no doubt seems as though the last great spasm of history were being enacted. A dozen killed and a score wounded look like hundreds to the man who has not seen corpses and wounded "in

bulk." In fact, there is nothing in the world so misleading as the importance of riots and the alleged losses. When one comes to analyze it, half the supposed dead prove to be only wounded or stunned, while the bulk of the alleged fatally wounded are only slightly hurt, or so badly frightened that they fall over each other in their anxiety to get away. All this to the amateur observer looks like a world sensation, but if one digests it all a day or two later, when the excitement has subsided, it appears that the police have merely dispersed a disorderly rabble with a few casualties. In the meantime, however, the excited witness, who perchance has never heard a shot fired in anger before, has sent out his story of "atrocious massacre by the police" with all the lurid details which, in his mind, are unparalleled. The story does not lose as it travels through the big centers of news distribution, and when it finally gets into the daily papers it gives the reader the impression that a world spasm has been enacted. The "special correspondent" is rushed to the scene of the occurrence, and when he arrives a week afterwards he finds the life of the town moving much as before, and a few bullet holes in some wall the only visible signs of the "horrible riot." He learns that the revolutionists are in durance vile, and if he takes the pains to investigate, he will find a few poor peasants and a handful of long-haired, wild-eyed Russian students shut up in a dirty room. This, then,

is a type of the great majority of Russian riot or revolution "stories."

In the newspaper world it often happens that "no news" is really important news, though perhaps not sensational. And so it was in Sevastopol at this time. I was able to draft an accurate cable pricking the bubble of mystery and horror with which the outside world was then viewing the Sevastopol situation.

There are newspapers, I believe, that won't stand for the "no news" types of communications, but expect and insist on getting their column a day, more or less, news or no news. This is the policy which has bred "yellow journalism." It is no doubt a hard proposition to work for, and I am sure it is a hard one to work against, for I've tried it many times. The correspondent that represents a conservative paper has a truly mean time when he is on an assignment with a number of fellows who are cabling for the other type, for it is not at all uncommon for them to take rumors, or even fakes, agree on the details, and send them broadcast. Naturally, the man who is there and does not send such stories gets the credit of having missed a good thing and of being asleep on his assignment. But in the long run it does not pay (to put it on the lowest grounds), for the senders of inaccurate dispatches soon get discredited, and when they really turn up a good story, no one believes it, and its value is nil. The Chicago *News* asked for news—not

space matter. For months at a time I have sent no cables home, and then suddenly turned loose with a thousand words a day. Their attitude was, and rightly, that their space was worth money, lots of it, and unless the news in itself was worth as much as that space, it was not wanted in the office. It was for this reason that I never had to pad or press with my stuff, and on this occasion, as on many others, I sent merely what it was worth, quite irrespective of the money we had been spending to get it, which is rightly no criterion as to the value of a bit of news.

From the British Consul, to whom I had letters, I learned some of the details of the earlier troubles, and of the mutiny of the fleet. At no time it seemed was the uprising of the sailors generally popular with those simple hearted folk. It was said that at least 75% of the men were unwilling participants in the romantic adventure of the then famous Lieutenant Schmidt, who stole one of the big Russian battleships and ran off with it, to the confusion of the rest of the fleet. The laborers at the naval station in Sevastopol whom we had supposed to be blood-thirsty wretches marching the streets, howling for the blood of the Czar, a Grand Duke or two, or, in fact, any old tyrant, had, instead of performing these picturesque acts, gone quietly to work and organized themselves into a police force to help patrol the city, and in this rôle they had shown

themselves more effective than the regular police. Another good story gone wrong! The really obstreperous characters of the movement had been caught and were shut up on the ships that we had seen lying in the harbor.

There were some dramatic incidents, without doubt, during the few days in which the mutiny was at its height, but the capture of the ringleaders resulted in its utter collapse.

What I did hear, however, was that there really was a fierce row in progress down in the Caucasus, at the other end of the Black Sea, and the details seemed to be sufficiently numerous and accurate to convince me that I would be better off there than where I was. Anyway, it would be only a question of a few hours before some "kill-joy" would hold me up for my pass-port and learn that I was on shore without leave and be sure to kick up a row that might delay me for days.

So, after getting a good square meal at the hotel and smoking a cigar, I walked leisurely out to the remote nook among the rocks, where my ship's boat lay, and with no more trouble than at landing was rowed back to the *France*.

As soon as I was aboard the captain raised the Blue Peter, that little white centered blue flag, which says "I am sailing to-day. Please come out quick and give me a clearance." Of course, no one noticed the flag, but as we had plenty of steam under our decks, we kept the fog horn groaning dismally until the officials ashore, in

sheer distress at our tumult, came back in their launch. The man in charge was the same as had come off to us in the morning, and almost his first words were that it would be impossible for us to go ashore that day. So, looking as disappointed as I could, and after a few protests at being kept in the harbor all day without being allowed to go into their most interesting town, I told him that we had decided not to wait any longer, and would go away that very night if he would fix up our papers. The complacent smile of the official who had succeeded in blocking someone in the pursuit of his business wreathed his face. He was sure it was best for us to go away, he told us, for it would be quite impossible for him to permit us to land. If we would wait he would go back to his office and fix our papers and have them aboard so that we might get away that night. Strangely enough, he was as good as his word, and a little after 8 P. M. a launch came alongside, and the papers, properly viséd and countersigned, in a sufficient number of places, which authorized us to depart, were handed over the rail. Our friend then departed with self satisfied regrets that we had been able to see nothing of their beautiful city.

Sevastopol is an interesting town of nearly 60,000, replete in the history of that ghastly siege of the Crimean war, the marks of which are still traceable on the bleak hills lying about the town. But as nothing of very keen interest re-

lated to this story transpired on the occasion of my visit, I will not burden the reader with more than a bare paragraph on the subject. The roadstead and the harbor and the extensive establishments connected with them form the most important features of the place. The great harbor fortifications which existed at the period of the siege were planned in 1834. The hand defenses, lines of trenches, and so forth, had not been fairly completed when the allied armies of England and France commenced their siege operations. Though compressed into a comparatively small space, the real strength was enormous, five to six thousand men being engaged on them daily during the eleven months of the siege. The garrison during this period was usually about 30,000 men, and the number of guns said to have been in position at the final assault was placed at 800, though several times that number were rendered unserviceable during the siege. The Russian loss in the defense has been placed at 80,000. The fortifications and naval establishments were after the capture destroyed by the allies, and by the treaty of Paris, which terminated the war, Russia was debarred from building arsenals and maintaining a naval force in the Black Sea above a very limited magnitude, but this restriction was removed in 1871. The town has been completely rebuilt, and since 1885 the fortifications have been actively replaced and the docks reconstructed. Sevastopol has become a

pleasant watering place, and is Russia's greatest southern Naval Headquarters.

It was a little after eight when a "Stand By" on the engine telegraph and a "Heave Away" to Spero at the donkey engine brought the crew to their stations. The gentle throb of the engines ahead and astern to clear the water out of the valves and the chug chug and "clinkety clink" of the anchor chain as it came jerking through the hawser hole in the bow was the only sound on the stillness of the water, save the occasional far away call of a sentry on one of the battleships. While the deck crew were hoisting the anchor over the side and lashing it into place, the *France* swung gently about, and the steady strengthening beat of her engines pulsed through the ship as she headed out to sea.

The moon was all but full, and cast a silvery sheen over the still waters of the harbor. Every prospect during the early afternoon and evening had cheered us with a hope of a still night, but the "kill joy" barometer that hung over our little fireplace had been steadily falling. We had hoped that, like our weather men at home, it might be on one of its breaks. But before we had fairly cleared the harbor our friend, the moon, politely made its apologies, and, with a last flicker of light, disappeared into a cloud bank. One by one the stars that twinkled brightly in the cold, crisp air faded from sight, until at nine o'clock the only light on the horizon was the steady glow

of the beacon on a bit of a peninsula that lay to the south of us. In half an hour we had cleared this, and the *France* was riding with long sweeps over an oily sea that was coming up from the south in long rippleless swells. An occasional gust of wind foretold what was coming. With each minute the bursts became more frequent, and in an hour we were running into a steady gale that by midnight had become a veritable tempest, driving the waves before it in great sweeping billows, their crests shrouded in spray that blew across our bridge and decks almost unintermittently.

By midnight the hope of a night's sleep had been abandoned, and the roar and crash of waters flooding us at every dip, mingled with the melancholy howling of the wind, that seemed to whip and circle around our little craft like an avenging spirit, created a tumult, which would have banished rest even had we been able to remain in our bunks. As a matter of fact, this was a proposition which I abandoned after a few futile attempts.

Earlier in the day I had weighed carefully our next move, and had decided to run for the little port of Sinope, almost due south of Sevastopol on the coast of Asia Minor. I wanted to go there for two reasons: first, because it was a cable station, from which I could send my Sevastopol story, and, second, because there I hoped I might learn more definitely of the situation in the Cau-

casus, which had been reported so acute at my last two ports of call. I figured that if the outlook there was good for a "story," I would keep right on down the Black Sea, and if not, I would be within easy run of the Bosphorus or any other point of interest. Hence it was that we were driving southward through the storm on this winter night.

A description of the wretched night we passed would merely be a repetition of those that had gone before, and so the reader can, and, no doubt, will, gladly pass over the next few hours. Along toward daylight I snatched a few hours of sleep, wedged in a corner of the cabin, with pillows stuffed about me to keep me steady in my moorings. We had reckoned on reaching Sinope by nine or ten in the morning at the latest, but the gale and head sea had fought our every inch of progress, and it was past that hour when we first traced through the mist of spray ahead of us the range of dreary snow-capped hills that loomed dimly before us, barely discernible with our glasses. By ten the clouds began to clear and the face of the sun showed itself brightly over the waters.

The wind died away as suddenly as it had risen, leaving the sea an undirected tumbling mass of water, which seemed to lash at us from every direction at once. I ordered breakfast served in my saloon, and for an hour preparations were in progress, but the first attempt to

set the table resulted in a mass of broken crockery, and breakfast being deposited in one corner of the saloon. I told Morris that I would take my breakfast in the galley, where I could be right at the fountain head of all good breakfasts. I found Stomati there hanging on to one of the steel columns with one hand and holding a pot of oatmeal in place with the other. A coffee pot was wired in place on the other end of his stove, and the contents thereof were slopping out every time the ship rolled. He announced that the coffee was ready, and while he was taking off the wire the oatmeal pot, released for a second, leapt nimbly from its place and landed in the garbage receptacle across the galley. However, I did get the coffee and a piece of burned toast into the bargain, which, after all, wasn't too bad under the circumstances.

The hills along the coast of Asia Minor rise steeply from the sea, and with the clearing of the heavens they stood out radiantly in the morning sunlight, and in spite of the discomforts of the sea and wetness that was blowing across us still, our hearts rejoiced. After all there is nothing that revives one's spirits like the good old sun. Great schools of porpoises were playing along beside the boat, and I amused myself until noon by practicing on them with my Colt, not so much to kill them as to increase my prestige, which wasn't much at best, with my mongrel crew of Greeks and Turks, who enjoyed the target

practice immensely, and, as Morris said, "Are sure impressed."

An attempt to serve lunch proved a miserable failure, and as we were within a few hours of port, we postponed that enterprise until three o'clock, when we ran in behind the bit of a headland that juts out around Sinope.

Approaching Sinope from the north one sees little or nothing of the town until one rounds in behind the peninsula which sticks out from the mainland like the letter T, with the little port nestled in the shoulder of the letter. The books which I have since read say that it is a good harbor, but even after we had gotten around the point and anchored, the swell was enough to force one to walk gingerly along the deck to keep from being spilled across the rail. Personally (this is a true narrative and facts must be allowed) I had never heard of the place until I spied it on the chart when I was poring over that useful adjunct to navigation while we lay in the harbor of Sevastopol awaiting the Russians to give us our clearance papers. It does appear, however, upon investigation, that it has been on the map for a good long time. We even learned (to shame our ignorance) that Mithradates the Great, whose life is no doubt familiar to all our readers, first saw the light of day here as recently as 134 B. C. It was the capital also of Pontus, a name equally well known and distinguished. A lot of interesting people seem to have found this place, at

one time or another. It seems that Mohammed Number II came in here in 1470 and created quite a sensation with the population at that time by capturing the place to the confusion of the survivors. A Russian Admiral with an ingenious name fought a naval battle with the Ottoman fleet here in 1853, and said fleet suffered its own loss with four thousand of its crew. This last interesting event decided England and France to interfere and brought on the Crimean war. Besides being famous for all these interesting incidents, Sinope exports fruit, fish, skins, nuts and tobacco. The day I was there all these useful products of its industries were not in evidence, or much of anything else, for that matter. But I take the word of the reference book (the refuge of all writers who travel) that on sunny days the inhabitants do as above mentioned.

So it was in this city of these remarkable traditions, linked with ancient history and seemingly with no connection to the modern world, that the *France*, flying the ensign of the Chicago *Daily News*, let go her anchor, to the astonishment of the natives, who, no doubt, knew more of the illustrious Mithradates and his doings than of the city of Chicago, which, in the form of the *France*, had so unexpectedly descended on their legend laden harbor.

So much then for the due we owe to the reader who wishes to be instructed. But in the meantime (even before the dawn of this knowledge

was upon us) I had ordered Stomati to do his worst, and in fifteen minutes after we anchored we began the first substantial meal we had touched since leaving Sevastopol.

CHAPTER X

We Send Our Cable from Sinope and Then Sail for the Caucasus, Where Rumor States Revolution and Anarchy to Be Reigning Unmolested

After the meal mentioned so enthusiastically in the last chapter, we rowed ashore in the long-boat and effected a landing at a decaying old pier (which in truth gave the appearance of being little used for the disembarking of the fish, skins, etc., before mentioned) and were welcomed (?) by a ragged crowd of open-mouthed, very dirty creatures that inhabit this interesting coast. Accompanied by Morris, the second engineer and Stomati, who was practicing his seven languages at once on such victims as seem to promise hope of intellect, we wound our way up a street of fallen-down dirty houses toward the telegraph station. Fortunately Stomati knew the word for "Telegraph Office" in the language of the country. I never felt quite so much like a brass band or an elephant as during that short journey to the "Imperial Ottoman Postal and Telegraph Office." I am sure any circus that had such a following in its street parade would count the day a successful one indeed.

It was with a little dubiousness that I filed my wire, for the Turkish officials are far more strict in their censorship than those of any other government. But I hoped that a message originating at this out of the way place might get on one of the through wires and slip past the central station, where the censors preyed in Constantinople. For, as a rule, the actual senders care nothing about the contents of a dispatch, and, as a matter of fact, generally do not know the language, simply sending the letters as they read them. So I hoped mine might slip through the back door, as it were, and never be noticed by the officious uniformed functionary that sits in the front office of the Constantinople stations and reads other people's confidential communications. This operator knew a little English, and at his first sign of suspicion as he read over my "story" of the revolutionary situation in Russia, I handed him a cigar and a golden English sovereign, which cheered him up so much that he stopped reading my message and went out and got me a dirty cup of Turkish coffee about as thick as molasses. Experience has taught me that there are two useful forms of influence; first, the exchange of pleasantries, accompanied by a coin of appropriate value, and, secondly, a polite but firm intimation that the "mailed fist" is available in case of obstreperous conduct. So, while the coffee was coming I wrote a short commercial message to the head of our London office, as follows:

Am filing an important press despatch of 287 words. If it does not reach you simultaneously with this or shows signs of being tampered with, have the matter vigorously investigated by the proper authorities.

I knew that the commercial messages usually went promptly and were censored leniently, if at all. The operator also knew this fact. Also did a great light loom upon him as to complications which might arise, if the message were delayed. So without a word he went into the rear room, where ticked the instruments and my cable was started on its way. I learned weeks later, when I finally reached London, that the same messenger boy had brought both telegrams at the same time, the news dispatch being 287 words exactly.

As the ground felt pretty solid and comfortable, after the *France*, and as the coffee was not nearly as bad as it looked, we sat in the office until the last word had gone, and then engaged the Turkish operator in pleasant converse. He invited us into a more pretentious, if even dirtier, apartment (which might be termed his lair), and we signified that we would be glad to pay the price of the drink of the country, if his influence could procure the same. More cigars circulated. Kind words passed freely. After the foundation for and that peculiar atmosphere particularly adapted to confidences had been firmly established, we began gently to encourage communication on those subjects which had been

passing over the wire between the Caucasus and Constantinople. Probably outside of this extremely dirty gentleman in blouse and red trousers, who now seemed so well disposed, there was not a soul in town who had any information on any subject that would have been of the slightest interest outside of the port of Sinope. But our host, in his leisure moments (which I gathered comprised a fair share of the twenty-four hours), had noted what the wires were saying. Once he had become aroused in the subjects of interest along his line, he had made it a point to interview such seamen and others that touched the little town. He really knew a lot. When he had finished, we flattered ourselves that we knew as much as he did anyway as to the situation up in the Caucasus up to the past ten days, when, as our friend opined, the extension of the cable into the Caucasus had been suddenly cut. Anyway, communications thence had ceased abruptly. What we learned in brief was as follows:

That the strikes and riots which had been prevalent all over Russia had hit the eastern end of the Caucasus, and hit it hard! Batuum, the main port at the end of the Black Sea, was in a ferment and filled with refugees. That the ships had all stopped going there, that the town was full of sweepings of the entire region plus Cossacks sent there to keep order. No one seemed to know which side the soldiers would take. It was reported that the Russian officials were be-

sieged in one of the public buildings. That the troops were disloyal to their officers and were killing the population promiscuously, and that all of the decent citizens were shut up in their houses praying for relief. A French ship had brought out the last word ten days earlier, to the effect that a railroad strike was on and that towns were burning everywhere, and that anarchy was blazing in all quarters of the Caucasus. With this boat had come two hundred refugees, and it was said that there were hundreds more in Batuum hoping against hope that some ship would come and take them away. These were just a few of the things that the operator told us. To be sure, some of the facts conflicted, and a lot of the statements did seem a bit improbable. But before our interview was half finished I was convinced that, even though nine-tenths of the tales might be fabrications, there was enough left in the remaining tenth to make a cable. When we had pumped our informant dry, my mind was made up. We would certainly leave that very night for Batuum.

Our trip on the Black Sea thus far had been one of constant hardship, cold and discomfort, which makes a more unfavorable impression on one than do active dangers, though these too seemed quite stiff enough. The news results seemed so far, inadequate to the outlay, in the way of effort and endurance. One does like to feel in taking chances that there is to be an equivalent return

in some direction. The outlook up in the Caucasus pleased us all. In the first place, there seemed to be important news features there, and in the second place, there were refugees (probably some of them Americans) who were praying for relief. So it did seem as though we would be justified in taking what risks presented themselves. After one has been in tight places one's own self on various occasions, one has more sympathy for others suffering in a like manner, and the idea of perhaps getting some refugees as well as news appealed strongly. So before leaving the telegraph office I sent a wire home, mentioning briefly the situation and winding up with the following:

Shall bring off all American refugees would suggest that our State Department request the Porte (Which signifies the Sultan's government) to permit American warships pass through Bosphorus and protect our interests which appear to be in danger that place.

I also sent a wire to the American Embassy at Constantinople on the same lines advising them that if I did not show up within a week to please make an effort to see what had become of us. After both of these cables were on the wire I felt that I had taken all precautions for the future that I could think about, and we returned to the *France* and put to sea.

About every day that winter seemed to be the

same on those peaceful waters, as far as storm and stress were concerned. We were running up the coast of Asia Minor a few miles off shore all of that night and the next day. It is a bleak and barren shore, with snow-covered mountains rising abruptly from the ragged rocks, against which the sea beat and frothed with a boom that came to us at sea, as loud as distant thunder.

It was about noon on the following day that I opened my diary to make the day's entry. It was December 24th. Christmas eve! I had even forgotten that Christmas existed, and for the first time it occurred to me that we would celebrate rather a dismal day on the little *France*. It is the season of the year when one's mind wanders far from wars and waves and tumult, and my thoughts drifted back across the broad Atlantic to a certain home, where festivities would be going forward apace on this day, and little children would be expectantly doing up bundles and trimming all with green and holly.

I sent Morris forward for the skipper and asked him if there was a cable station within range of us. Together we pored over the chart and figured that we might reach Trebizond by four that afternoon, if all went well, and the course was duly altered. Sure enough, promptly on the hour we rounded the point and sailed into the mere angle on the coast they call a harbor at Trebizond. Half a dozen ships lay at anchor riding the heavy swell that came booming in

from the sea, and then swept on to break with grim fury on the shore a mile or so beyond. One of these ships was a French mail steamer of 3500 tons, which had been lying there for ten days waiting for the storm to abate, and the others had been standing by for varying lengths of time for a similar purpose.

There was a bit of rotten old stone pier sticking out from the jumble of houses on the shore. The sea was beating about it with great waves that hid it intermittently from our view, by the spray and spume created by their angry lashings. However, there did not seem to be any other place to land, so we ordered out our biggest boat, and with not a little difficulty got her into the sea without damage.

Then one by one we piled aboard, each waiting the moment to jump, while the crew on the *France* held the dancing shell away with poles. Four men and Morris formed the escort, and once aboard they gave away with a will as the close proximity to our tug threatened to upset us any minute. But once we got her head into the sea, and our four men tugging in rhythm at the oars, all went well. I had often been in a ship's boat in a seaway, but nothing quite like this. Every minute a great sea would come racing in from the open waters and a mountain black it would sweep under our stern, lifting us high in the air, and then our little boat would go sliding back into the valley behind like a cat trying to climb

a steep roof. Down, down we would go into the trough until our horizon was bounded only by the waves that had swept under us, and its big black brother following close behind. Each time we would mount the crest we would see the shore ahead and the *France* astern of us; each time we dipped the ridges of spray capped seas would shut them from sight. But each dip brought us nearer shore. As we approached the pier I saw that there was a kind of breakwater jutting out from one side and behind it a still patch of water. Between the pier and the stone masonry was a channel of perhaps fifty feet. Each moment the seas would go roaring through this little opening, whose walls were flanked with clouds of spray breaking on both sides. Then the next second back would come the wash to meet the next wave. This looked to me to be our best place to land. In fact, it seemed the only place. Waiting just the right time and mounted on the crest of a roller we came sweeping down toward this veritable millrace. Standing up in the stern to steer I encouraged the crew to pull their hardest. For a moment we hung on the crest and then like a toboggan we bore down toward the narrow passage, the sailors pulling their oaken oars till they fairly bent. For an instant we were in a cloud of spray and midst the tumult of the seas breaking over the masonry at either side, and then we shot into the quiet waters like a sled gliding over smooth ice.

In a few minutes we pulled up to a flight of stone steps and were arguing with a stupid Turk about passports. I forget the details now, but anyway we bluffed him, and ten minutes later I handed in a wire at the telegraph office to that home across the seas. I was wet, cold and wondering in the back of my head how in the world we would ever manage to get back to the *France* through that surf as I passed in the two words for home: "Merry Christmas," and signed my name. Somehow I felt that the words did not adequately describe my own feelings, but then no one at home would know the difference, so it would not matter anyway. I called on the American consul and gathered from him a general confirmation of the story that I had picked up at Sinope. He was a nice man and very gossipy. His house was on a bluff overlooking the harbor. He was surprised to see us at all, and more surprised to learn that we had come in the *France*, which was plainly visible bobbing up and down in the harbor like a duck in rough water. His advice was to remain in port awhile, as we were going to have a big storm, and he thought the *France* ridiculously small at best. It was he who pointed out the French Mail to me and gave her as a precedent for remaining in port. However, as we had been having storms pretty steadily for a week, and as we were still intact, I told him that I thought we would go ahead anyhow. He was very cordial, and so I invited him to dinner on the

France, but after verifying his earlier impressions of her by a careful scrutiny through a spy-glass, he politely but firmly declined the pleasure.

Trebizond stands out in my mind as one of the most wonderfully picturesque places that I have ever seen. It is the contact point, as it were, between the East and the West. The setting is Oriental to a degree, with the streets filled with riff-raff and hodge-podge of a dozen different races. Here starts that great overland trail, across mountain plain and desert, that leads far far away into Persia, India, aye, and it is said even unto Turkestan and China itself. Long trains of the patient mangy camels, with their trappings of dirty red and their escorts of strange attendants, come with them from heaven only knows where, are moving through the streets toward the trail that lies beyond.

It is with a curious fascination that one watches the slow dignified movements that carry them over the ground at the rate of but a meager mile or two an hour. It seems impossible to realize that these melancholy beasts with their quivering pendulous lips and woebegone eyes, will keep up that same pace for weeks and months, hour after hour, until at last they lay them down in their distant terminus in the far-off East that ever stands in our minds as the land of mystery.

Trebizond has a very mongrel population indeed, and it is a constant wonder to see so many different peoples packed into this one dirty town.

There seems to be many Armenians, and as the reader no doubt recalls, this little port was freely mentioned in the press a few years ago as the scene of the ghastly massacres perpetrated on these dismal people. One always hesitates to criticize with a merely superficial knowledge, yet the Armenians impress one casually as being about the most unpleasant people imaginable. They have a genius for conspiracy and the making of fifty-seven varieties of trouble that is perhaps unique. The result is that every once in a while some Turk in a genial mood says, "Come on, fellows, let's kill-up a few Armenians," and the massacre is on. It does seem outrageous to do all these things, but one who sees the Armenians sometimes wonders if they don't bring a lot of trouble on themselves by their own actions and characters.

The good kind missionary whom I met did not think so, and very likely he knew what he was talking about, while my opinion is merely a shot in the dark on a subject viewed superficially.

My friend the missionary took me around and introduced me to the governor, a somewhat besmirched gentleman in a dirty red uniform, who had eyes like a rat, which wandered over my person until I felt for my watch. He did not speak English nor I Turkish, so our conversation was not particularly entertaining. I don't know what his opinion of me was, but my opinion of him was that he was about the worst looking specimen

that I had ever seen. He had G-R-A-F-T written all over him in large letters.

He rather queered his town with me, and I went back to the harbor just at dusk. The wind had changed and the tide was running out, so that we managed to get out through the breakwater with nothing worse than a pretty severe wetting. The barometer (as usual) was falling. So I decided to have one more square meal before we put to sea. So it was nine o'clock when the anchor came up and we turned our nose away from the lights of the town, far more hospitable in appearance, by night than by day, and headed into the darkness that lay without.

CHAPTER XI

Christmas Morning on the Black Sea.

It is approximately a ninety-mile run from Trebizond to the harbor of Batuum, and for this entire distance there is not an anchorage along the coast. From the time one leaves Trebizond the mountains rise sheer up from the sea, their bases studded with reefs and ragged rocks or else rising in cliffs, going straight up for hundreds of feet above the water. At Batuum there is a bit of a bay with a breakwater across the narrowest part of it, which justifies its being called a harbor. Then the coast reaches on in another bleak and barren stretch of forty miles to another nominal port rejoicing in the name of Poti. And for this distance the mountains march grandly along, reaching an altitude which must be at least six or seven thousand feet. The constant storms of winter had left them mantled deep in the glaring white of winter snows, save where here and there some great black elbow of rock had been stripped of its cloak by the whipping winter winds.

The sea was running strong and the wind high when we put out that Xmas Eve, but in spite of adverse conditions we figured that daylight

would find us off the little town of Batuum. As we did not want to get there before the light should show to us the uncertain channel midst the rocks and reefs that led to the harbor, we turned the engines down to a conservative ninety revolutions, which kept her going easily into the seas, which she was riding with the serenity of a strong swimmer disporting himself in the surf.

The motion, though a bit too active to permit of continued sleep, was still not vigorous enough to cause any particular anxiety. A large part of the night we spent on the bridge. The moon rose late, and by its intermittent light, as it sailed along behind the ribbon of clouds that spread o'er the heavens, we could see the grim and ghostly line of the mountain range that silvered and darkened as the light of the moon came and went.

The first gray light of Christmas day disclosed a bleakness of coast far more dismal than we had left behind.

We were running along the rim of the Black Sea basin, so near that we could plainly see the coming and going of the clouds of spray that told of the never ceasing struggle of the waves against the relentless cliffs that for centuries have grimly turned the surging waters into foam and noisy tumult. Aye, and long before the dawn the roar rose and fell on our ears as sea after sea dashed upon the sterile sternness that ever hemmed them in.

In the dim half light of the morning I stood by the skipper on the spray showered bridge, and with him through the dissolving darkness tried to pick out the harbor bearings of the port that was to be our Christmas refuge. The man had evidently been drinking during the night, as I gathered, and he was dense in mind and stupid beyond conception. The little engineer, who spoke English, joined us on the bridge, for all realized the general necessity of reaching port within a reasonable length of time, as our coal was running short. We had just about enough, as a matter of fact, to get back to Trebizond, but I had learned on the previous day that none was obtainable there, and hence we were relying on Batuum to replenish our bunkers. By eight o'clock the sky gave promise of a dreary day, and the barometer, with no uncertain index finger, was pointing to worse. In fact, it was creeping down perceptibly each hour, and already recorded the lowest figure that we had read on its ever cynical face since we had come to live in its sinister shadow.

Breakfast, as usual, was out of the question, and anyway we were all eagerly searching the coast line for the harbor mouth that had brought us hence. A new snow during the night had turned the whole landscape white, and with the snowy mountain wall rising up sharply in the background, we could not discover a sign of anything that might be construed into a symptom of

a port. Eight-thirty came at last, and the little engineer discovered a mountain elbow on our port bow which he emphatically stated that he knew, and knew well. In his opinion, we had overshot Batuum. The skipper was easily persuaded that this was the case, and so we put about, and with a redoubled watch crept back along the coast. An hour or more we cruised with our eager spyings, rewarded by not a sign which might betoken the longed for haven. In the meantime in the west the evergrowing cloud of black verified the fact that the barometer had not been working in the dark. I was eager enough to reach the harbor in the beginning, but with each minute that I watched that black mass grow and bulge against the western sky, my anxiety increased. I called the Chief and asked for an estimate as to how much coal we had remaining in our bunkers. He was gone fifteen minutes, and his troubled face confirmed my intuitions of uncertainties ahead.

"Not as much coal as we had hoped," he replied to my look rather than to any spoken word. "We have enough to last until this afternoon, and no doubt we will be in port ere that, unless—" and his bright little eyes swept the western heavens where the great relentless cloud was throwing its sable mantle across the sky.

"Yes, unless—" I replied. It was obvious to us both that we must make that harbor before the storm should shut us in, for once the snow and

mist and sleet was upon us, our only hope of reaching port would be gone, and we would have to run for the open sea and ride it out. Not a very hopeful enterprise, this, even with full coal bunkers, but still less alluring with but six or eight hours steaming ability left, and these barren rocks leering at us for ninety miles along the coast.

For an hour we ran west, and then one of the crew picked up a familiar landmark. His statement was verified by others. In our backward run we had again slipped by the port without seeing it! The landmark was on the Trebizond side of Batuum!

Once more we put her head about, and once more cruised back along the coast. We talked it over and all agreed that we must find our refuge within the scanty hour that the storm would be upon us. The crew, too, began to realize our plight. Indeed, it did look grave enough. All that were not on duty in the engine-room were peering toward the shore, their trained eyes trying to develop some tangible sign or landmark out of the snowy hillside that rose from the sea and swept backward till its peaks stood dimly outlined against the leaden winter's sky.

For an hour we cruised along, every man on the boat chattering his anxiety and apprehension. They are not very strong on danger, these Black Sea sweepings (at least, that was my impression);

only Morris grinned imperturbably, though in truth his grin became less and less heartfelt and finally slipped into the grimace type of humor. Yet he would not show his fear.

And ever did the great storm cloud grow in size and blackness in the west.

Faint streaks of green, yellow and purple shot its somber masses, until it grew like an image of Dante's Inferno in our minds. Though I looked the other way, a dreadful fascination ever brought my eyes back to the rising menace, that steadily, surely, even as the mantle of death swept on toward us.

By nine-thirty the heavens were filled with its suppressed fury, and the wind awed by the impending presence of a far greater force seemed to fade to nothing and slink away before this towering passion that wrapped in silence was sweeping down upon us—a silence that became oppressive, and was broken only by the slap of the waves against our steel sides, and the dreary refrain of the sea rolling monotonously on the rockbound shore.

"Well, we're back to our original landmark!" remarked the engineer, half to himself. I looked and sure enough there was the black elbow that he had diagnosed hours before as being beyond Batuum.

We held a hurried council on the bridge. We had cruised this coast now three times, and we knew that three times we had slipped past our

haven of refuge, with its landmarks hidden to us by the whiteness of the background. Poti lay perhaps thirty-five miles beyond. The storm was coming up faster, ever faster. Three times we had failed to find Batuum, and there seemed little chance that the fourth would be more successful. So we decided on Poti and called for "full speed." The *France* responded promptly to the order from the bridge.

But the decision came too late.

Already the storm was flanking us, and its blackness had swept to seaward of us and rapidly promised to cut off our advance. Some miles ahead of us was a great steel steamer evidently in a similar plight. She too was heading for port, and columns of smoke were issuing from her big black funnel. Presently as we watched, a white cloud of spray crossed her bow and even as a curtain, shut out the beyond. Gradually she came about and started westward down the coast. Her skipper realized just as we did, that naught but wreck and misery lay within that churning cloud that had unloosed its fury upon the deep. Already its steadily rising howl whined and moaned across the waters, not unlike the melancholy wail of the starving timber wolf penetrates the stillness of the night and reaches the lonely trapper in his winter camp and causes him to throw another armful of wood on the fire and whistle to assuage that subtle foreboding of calamity that the thin

knife-like cry in the night seems vaguely to predict.

It was hopeless for us to drive further into that storm. Five hours at best would see us out of fuel, and then driven before the wind and sea we would be dashed upon the rocks. We did not even discuss the situation. Involuntarily the man at the wheel brought her head around, and for the fourth time we began our trip down the coast. To the west of us the storm had shut out the mountains. To the north a veritable blizzard was lashing the waves into a frenzy; to the east snow and sleet shut out our progress. Perhaps five miles of shore bare and forbidding remained to us. If we could but find Batuum's shrouded entrance within that five miles, all would be well, yet thrice had we striven and failed. Somehow my optimistic spirit failed to respond to the occasion. In the meantime every minute was cutting our five miles of open coast line—aye, and cutting it down fast, for the storm was shutting in from both sides and from the sea as well.

The steel steamer was overtaken by the great bank of snow and sleet and disappeared from our view, and I might add from our thoughts, for we had troubles of our own.

The crew were running about frantically. Half of them were on the bridge waving their arms and evidently abusing the skipper. I

walked back in disgust and stood by the companion-way that led down into my little saloon and, leaning against the towing post, just aft, I looked across the sea. Morris followed me and for a moment stood silent. He smiled faintly and then murmured:

"Merry Christmas, sir." And we both laughed, only it was not such a hearty laugh as one generally associates with the day.

There was nothing to do but wait. There seemed no alternative.

What a way to end up! We looked at the rocks and then at the sea, and I wondered what the sensations would be.

Christmas! It seemed almost providential that I had made the effort the day before and got off my message for home. It would be my last word! It seemed hard to realize that it actually was Xmas. I looked at my watch. It was almost the exact hour that they would be having their Christmas tree, away back across the ocean.

"Morris," I said, "this looks like the end to me. How does it strike you?"

He did not look at me as he replied so low as barely to be audible, "Yes, sir; it looks pretty bad to me, too."

I looked at him curiously and wondered how he really felt behind that black face of his.

"Morris," I said again after a moment, "how do you feel about death, anyway?"

He looked at me and then he looked at the sea, and smiled faintly as he answered:

"Well, sir, the water looks cold to me."

At that moment there was a break in the clouds. Oh, such a little break! Out of it fell a mere handful of sunlight, as rays fall into a darkened room when the blinds are thrown open. The clear, transcendent shafts fell across the waters like a message from heaven, and suddenly there was a shout on the bridge, echoed by every member of the crew that was on deck.

From the whiteness of the hillside, just on our beam, there stood out a golden spot, that seemed no larger than a five dollar gold piece. For a moment it flashed like fire against the white. Then as quickly as it had come it dissolved from view.

It was the dome on the Greek church in Batuum.

The sun for just that tiny space had turned its brazen cupola to liquid light that marked for us the haven of our seeking.

Thirty minutes later we anchored behind the breakwater, and a mountain slid from off our souls.

CHAPTER XII

We Find Turmoil in the Caucasus but Celebrate Christmas in Spite of Storm and Stress

It was a close shave for us all that Christmas morning, for in another hour the storm broke in all its fury, and the site of the breakwater was only discernible by the dashing of the spray above it as the great waves rushing in from the sea broke against it until it seemed as though even the masonry must give before the weight of wind and water and leave us in the open once more. Of the steel steamer we had seen the last, for she, less fortunate than the *France*, was shut in by the storm, and that very afternoon was driven on the rocks a total wreck, though we knew it not until days later when we reached the Golden Horn and the pigmy *France*, with her two hundred odd tons register, was ordered back to try and make what she could out of the salvage of her big 2500-ton steel sister, that had come to such a bitter end within a few miles of the haven that we had scuttled into that morning.

However, a miss is as good as a mile, and indeed where danger is concerned far better, for one always has that exhilaration of having come through a tight hole, which in itself seems worth

the price of admission. Never was there a more enthusiastic crew, and one more replete in the true Christmas spirit than the little handful that beamed cheerfully on the Customs Officer as he came aboard that morning.

The tedious examination which always comes in Russia now ensued more rigorously than ever before. Every locker was pried open in search of bombs or some evidence of some evil intent. The only high light of the occasion was a dispute that one of the examining officers fell into with one of his subordinates. The object of contention was my innocent typewriter sitting on the saloon table. The man with the gold lace and sword was insisting that it was a musical instrument, and as such should be carefully put in bond during our stay in port, as it appears that there is some strange law involving a heavy tax on a number of useful articles that might help the inhabitants of the Caucasus to wile away the time. Next our gorgeously uniformed official tumbled over a case of champagne in one of the lockers. He at once called for seals with which to close up the locker until we departed, as it seemed that drinks too were not to be landed without a tax. I explained patiently in German that these drinks were not for introduction into the Caucasus, but were brought along purely for local consumption. But my explanations were objected to as unworthy of comment and the seals were promptly produced. I explained to the officer that it was

Christmas, and that we wanted the wine for our dinner. After much deliberation he admitted that we should have a little refreshment under the circumstances, but decided that one quart of champagne would be all that was good for us. Fancy! Four men, and on Christmas day, too! And the worst of all from a Russian! However, we assented, as Stomati, the ever faithful cook, had whispered that it mattered not for he knew a sliding panel in the back of the locker provided for just such exigencies, so with an easy conscience we watched the red wax and seal being placed on our supply of cheer.

In the meantime I was told, as usual, that I could not leave the boat, and on coming on deck found two bayoneted sentinels marching up and down the decks, just to show that the order meant business. But while I was arguing my case with the officer in charge, a boat, rowed by four uniformed sailors, came alongside. It was the American Vice Consul Stuart, who, seeing the big American ship's flag flying at the fore, had started out as soon as we had anchored. We nearly embraced on the deck. At least, I did, for it was good to see someone from a civilized land, though I learned that Stuart was an Englishman and only acting-consul. He seemed glad to see us, and stated that it was the first American flag that he had seen in behind the breakwater during the eighteen years that he had been in Batuum, an interesting if somewhat depressing

bit of information to an American who likes to feel that his country's flag is at least known by sight in all quarters of the globe.

The consul at Trebizond had given me some grouse to present to Stuart, and after these had been thoroughly investigated and passed upon by the examiner, a permit was given for them to be passed. Stuart evidently had a strong pull with the government, for he quickly arranged with the officer that the sentries were to be withdrawn, and that I and any member of my crew might come and go at our own sweet will. After the dreary inspection was over, my newly acquired friend came down and took lunch with us, and little by little I drew from him fragments of that crazy quilt of actions and counter-actions, assassinations and executions, revolutions and suppressions that in Russia masquerade under the name of current politics.

From a newspaper point of view, the situation was full of interest. No correspondent had been here for weeks, and as the cables were long since out of commission, the cream of it was mine. What I learned in effect in the hour or two that I talked with my guest was that from the Black Sea to the Caspian the entire Caucasus was in a state of convulsion, revolution and anarchy. Street fighting and incendiarism had been rampant in practically all of the cities, both large and small. Only a few days before a mob had been dispersed by machine guns and Cossacks in

the streets of Batuum. The latter had become quite lawless, and it was the custom to kill any suspicious character first and investigate afterwards. If the aforesaid killed character proved on investigation to be a reputable citizen—well, then the joke was on him. Anyway, he ought to have stayed at home where he belonged, instead of roaming about the streets like a common Armenian. The latter, by the way, are always the red rag to the government bull, anywhere in this region, and the motto might be well adopted, "When in doubt, kill a few Armenians," just as one takes a dose of quinine when one gets wet. I gathered that Armenianitis had been having quite a run in Batuum about this time. Not because they were specially offensive just now, but just for luck. Street fighting in Russia is as well recognized a stage of revolution as an increased temperature and a quickened pulse is in typhoid fever. The cure is usually Cossacks and machine guns in hourly doses until improvement is noticed. This street fighting rarely means much except that people are voicing a long repressed sentiment of resentment and finally march in irresponsible bodies and are promptly dispersed with heavy losses. The Russian officers get medals, the dead are buried, and all moves on much as before. This was much what happened in Batuum the week before my arrival. A lot of poor ignorants had been killed. The town was in a state of siege, and people were being mur-

dered in the name of the law every day. Poti (the port we had aimed at and been turned back) was filled with armed revolutionists, who were said to be well organized and preparing to move on Batuum, which was the then center of Russian military strength in the Caucasus. Tiflis, up the railroad line (which had stopped running), was rent with strife and was the stage on which the Armenians and the Tartars were fighting over some involved question among themselves. For a month before these same two peaceful races had been tearing Elizabethpol (a town in the interior) into small fragments with their perpetual fights. Our town was full of refugees, who were stiff with lurid details. It was generally believed that Russian agents had started these inter-race troubles, always at fever heat, to prevent both from combining against Russia. The Armenians and Tartars are always ready to fly at one another's throats at two minutes' notice. It was quiet for the moment in Baku, but, as my informant advised me, the lull was merely temporary, as they were gathering energy there for another spasm of fighting. The railroad strike had crippled business and almost extinguished the remaining spark of commercial vitality left in the storm-tossed country. Trains were being run by the revolutionists simply to help their own plans of mobilization. As I wrote in my cable, the general situation was complex. Practically every town in the Caucasus was a situation pe-

culiar only to itself. From Tiflis to the Black Sea the dominating factor was the attitude of the Georgians, who were rebels rather than revolutionists. They were divided into many parties, each of which had aims and ideas that would require a chapter to describe. Some wanted absolute independence, while other factions were aiming at reforms only. All had stopped paying taxes, and the police were absolutely helpless and asked only to be let alone. The Georgians were openly defying these dejected officers of the law, and their boasted strength of 8000 organized men within a radius of forty miles of Batuum made their bluff (if indeed it was one) hold good. It was reported that the authorities at Tiflis were going to try and reopen the line of the railroad by force. The revolutionists replied to this that twenty-four hours after such an attempt should be made the railroad in the Caucasus would be non-existent; in other words, that they would blow it into small pieces. The situation was really depressing to the Russians.

All of these events have long since ceased to be of vital interest, and the semblance of peace and tranquillity have been restored, and once more the volcano which ever lies beneath the surface in that country of never ending turmoil is smoldering for the moment. It is not my intent to go into the history of the endless complications which were then rife further than the brief outline men-

tioned, as I merely wish to show the nature of the story which we had to gather.

Stuart advised me not to come ashore except unarmed, as he stated that during the past few days being armed had been considered sufficient provocation to administer instant death by the bands of Cossacks that patrolled the streets. Every morning bodies were found lying about in the snow—victims who had not given sufficiently good account of themselves to the half-drunken rowdies that roamed the streets under the name of Cossack patrols.

The storm was raging without, and so we decided to lie in the harbor until the sea had abated sufficiently for me to get some coal barges alongside to replenish our bunkers.

At three that afternoon we went ashore and had a splendid Xmas dinner with the Consul and absorbed the details and the atmosphere of the remarkable conditions that were the sole topic of conversation among the guests, each of whom had personal experiences and ghastly details to add to what I had already learned.

So interesting was the occasion that I had about made up my mind to accept my new friend's invitation to spend the night ashore to meet some other people, when Morris, with tears in his eyes, begged me to return to the *France* for dinner, as he said he had a surprise for me. So I told him to have the boat at the landing place at seven that evening, and a few minutes after that

hour I was in my little saloon on board the *France*.

It was a surprise! Morris met me at the foot of the companion-way wreathed in smiles, clad in my dress-suit, and my only clean white shirt. The fact that the trousers came up to his ankles, the sleeves almost to his elbows, and that each breath he took threatened to burst the back from the shoulders down, and that the collar he had squeezed into was nearly choking him to death, in no way seemed to diminish his keen enjoyment of the idea that he was the perfect representation of the most ideal of butlers. For a moment I was annoyed, for somehow one's dress clothes seem to be too sacred for promiscuous distribution. But his delight was so apparent and his anticipation of my pleasure in his transformation was so genuine that I had not the heart to spoil his little surprise.

Our little table was elaborately set for eight, with carefully prepared menu-cards at each plate. Four sad-looking strangers were seated in a melancholy row on a sofa and the captain and the two engineers, who had been obviously scrubbed, grinned sheepishly as I came in.

Morris, fairly knocking his heels together in sheer delight, swept a profound obeisance and in a ringing voice announced, "Christmas dinner is served, your honor!"

Well, I was surprised and no mistake!

"Who are these men in the corner, Morris?" I inquired.

GENERAL NOGI—THAN WHOM NO FINER GENTLEMAN EVER DREW THE BREATH OF LIFE

MORRIS INSPECTING OUR CHRISTMAS DINNER

NOT FOR LOAN

"Well, sir," he replied, "I don't just know exactly much about them, but it did not seem quite the thing to have Xmas dinner with just old man Gileti and the engineers, so these gentlemen, sir, are some that I found ashore to fill in, sir. I am sure you will find them quite satisfactory."

Perhaps I sighed a little inwardly, but I am sure I showed no outward emotion as I welcomed the shy and reticent quartette on the sofa. Morris had literally "stood by like steel" every minute of the voyage and this was his occasion, and I was bound that my appreciation should not be lacking.

It really was a wonderful dinner.

The faithful Morris as I then learned had been surreptitiously laying in the wherewithal for this banquet at every port. A young live pig at Sulina Mouth, a goose at Sinope, some birds at Trebizond and heaven only knows what besides. With the back panel of the sealed locker carefully slid out we tapped our liquid refreshment and in very truth the dinner proved a great success. Even the imported guests cheered up and by the end of the banquet were drinking toasts to me, the Chicago *Daily News*, to Morris, aye, and even unto the fat live pig, alive no longer, alas.

It was midnight when we wound up and sent our guests ashore and ourselves turned in for the night after a day perhaps the most varied in experience that I have ever lived through.

CHAPTER XIII

We sail Away from Batuum with a Beat, Official Dispatches, Foreign Mails and a Boatload of Refugees That Keep Us Awake Nights

I had hoped to sail away from Batuum the day after Christmas, but so fierce was the storm that it was impossible to take on coal. All this day and well into the next the roar of the sea on the breakwater sounded in our ears like a never-ending bombardment of big guns. Not in the memory of the oldest inhabitant had such a furious tempest raged within the harbor. Even the buildings along the shore were in danger and the beautiful little yacht clubhouse, a fraction of a mile above the port, was completely carried away by the great waves that broke beyond their accustomed bounds and crushed the frail structure as though it had been but a house of cards. But there is an end of all things and on the morning of the third day the wind abated and only the heavy swell that surged without in the winter sunshine was left to tell the tale of wreck and devastation that had swept the coast during the past days.

By ten o'clock I had two barges of coal alongside and a double crew at work passing baskets over the side and emptying them into the bunker holes in the deck. It was vile stuff that we were getting and the engineer fairly tore his hair as he saw the little better than dust being poured into his bunkers.

"She will never make steam on that rubbish," he kept crying again and again. Yet it was all that there was in Batuum and we had to take it or leave it. So we took it and at war prices at that. It certainly was a scandal and it broke my heart to pay out fifteen dollars a ton for stuff that in any other market would have gone begging at three dollars. But there was no alternative, so we took it, paid out our Rodwaner gold and smiled.

By noon we were fairly well stocked and ready to put to sea. Then there came to my mind the cable that I had sent not only to my paper but also to the American Embassy at Constantinople. "I propose to bring off American refugees," they had read. I had talked the matter over with Stuart and it appeared that the only Americans there were Armenians (nationalized in name only) and they for the most part declined to be deported, not even to help me to live up to my cables. I called Morris and explained the situation to him. American refugees was what the contract called for, but lacking the letter of my cable we would have to fill in with any kind of

refugees that the market offered. I told him to go ashore and make the necessary arrangements and to pass the word around that we were sailing that very afternoon at four o'clock. In the meantime I ordered up the "Blue Peter" to the foremast head that all ashore might know that we proposed to depart that day for the world that lay without. I went ashore and had lunch with Stuart, who introduced me to a number of the consuls of the Powers that were represented in Batuum, all of whom were eager to get word out to their governments. By three that afternoon I had packages of official dispatches, inscribed in impressive terms and sealed authoritatively, consigned to the governments of Austria, Holland, America and Great Britain, while a fair-sized sack was required to hold the mail that poured in upon us.

Stuart could not leave his office and I bade him farewell at his desk, accepting his cheery promise to "look me up" in America at an early planned visit to my country. Little did either of us think that ere a month would pass an assassin's bullet would cut him down in the very prime of his life. Yet so it was. I read a few weeks later in the European press my good, kind, cheery friend was shot from ambush by some unknown man, even as he was entering the door of his house. An excellent man was Stuart and a public servant true to his trust in time of trouble; so true, in fact, that in the execution of his official duties he had

encountered the opposition of some discontent in that seething vortex, who had availed himself of the cure of all evils in that wild country—assassination. A bare line or two announced his death and he was forgotten. Yet this man was in his way as much of a martyr to his duty as any soldier who falls gloriously in battle.

I made my way down to the landing place that afternoon with my dispatches and the bag of mail. On the pier alongside of which bobbed the little ship's boat of the *France* a great crowd was gathered. To me there seemed to be at least five hundred. And such a collection! Every race and nationality that a nightmare might conjure up. Armenians, Georgians, Turks, Jews, Persians, Russians from the Caucasus, Tartars and a dozen other races that resembled nothing that I had ever beheld. Each had his own roll of filthy baggage, mostly done up in sacks. Never had I in my life seen such an heterogeneous gathering nor such an assemblage of men that looked so utterly desperate and woebegone. It took me five minutes to work my way through the mass to the stairs where my boat lay. Morris was there swearing and arguing with the mob that was crowding about him yelling and entreating all at the same time. It sounded like the tumult one hears in the parrot house at the Zoo.

I jumped into my boat and called to the crew to "give way" for the *France*. As soon as I could make my voice heard above the din I asked

Morris what in the world it all meant anyway. I nearly fainted when he told me. They were my refugees! Not less than half a thousand, each with his heart set on escape from the country. Their plight was pitiful indeed, for the bulk of them had come from burning villages with only what they could carry in their hands. Driven from place to place they had finally landed in Batuum, which they found the worst of all, what between warring factions and the brutal soldiery, who chased them about the streets like sheep. Morris had done his work too well. It appeared that he had been to every shipping agent and had notices posted up that the *France* was leaving that very day and would carry refugees out of the Caucasus free of charge. No wonder the mob was on the pier! Morris was in high feather and fairly clicking his teeth with sheer delight. "Yes, sir," he said, "this is our busy day, sir! There hasn't been a minute since I came back from shore this noon that Monroe D. Morris hasn't been attending strictly to business. We are sure going to carry The Mails this trip, sir, and carry them right!" and he took me down in the little saloon where he had hung up a row of gunny sacks. Above them was a crudely printed notice: "Mails Close at 3:30 P. M. to-day." On each sack was a separate placard which read "Constantinople Mail," "Russian Mail," "Trebizond Mail," etc., on down the line of bags. Much to my surprise each of the bags was pretty well

filled and more was coming in every few minutes.

But in the meantime I had to decide about our refugees who were still roaring in the distance, not clearly understanding whether they were to be abandoned entirely or not. I called the skipper and asked him how many we could possibly carry. As a matter of fact there was no room for any save on the deck and in the chain locker forward, as our own crew filled the balance of the *France's* very small accommodations. We made an inspection and finally decided that we might stretch our space to hold thirty. Stomati the cook, armed with his seven languages, was sent off in the boat to pick out thirty likely-looking refugees. I instructed him to accept none without passports, which at once cut the total down about half. When the crowd on shore heard that only thirty could go there was a rush for the boat that nearly put the entire front rank into the sea. So after all there was not much of a chance to pick and choose and the boat brought off the first that came to hand, with their sacks and miscellaneous dunnage. Morris and Spero stood at the gangway inspecting passports and hustled the unaccepted passportless back into the boat to be relanded. For an hour the little boat plied back and forth until the *France* was alive with the human wrecks and their impedimenta.

In the meantime I was entertaining a few friends in my saloon who had come out to say good-by. By four in the afternoon our refugees

were all aboard and our papers duly received from the port officials. The sun had gone under a cloud and a stiff wind was blowing in from the sea as with anchor up, we swung around the end of the breakwater, with long blasts from our deep-toned foghorn as a farewell to friends ashore. The flag on the American Consulate was dipped and some enthusiast on the roof let go both barrels of a shotgun, to which we replied by bending our own ensign. In fifteen minutes we were at sea and the top of the Greek Church, the only sign left to us of the little town, to which it had been the first to welcome us from the storm a few days before.

At nightfall we were pounding into a heavy sea that swept across us at every dip. Not that it made any difference to us but it did play the mischief with our refugees quartered out on the deck. The first sea to come aboard was greeted with yelps and squeals from the poor wretches we had undertaken to rescue. In a few minutes it became obvious that the deck would not serve at all and we began to look about us for shelter somewhere on board. Then I began to curse myself for a fool for loading myself and the *France* down with these thirty irresponsible nondescripts whose only effort to help themselves was to cling to the rails and scream piteously every time we took a sea. Besides this most of them were desperately seasick. Finally, however, we disposed of them in a way. When we had them packed away for the

night there was not a spot on the boat that was not occupied, barring my own quarters, as I positively refused to introduce fifty-seven varieties of vermin (which did not have to be imagined) into my little cabin. Anyway I was afraid some of these disreputable creatures might steal what gold I had left from my coal deal in Batuum. In the engine room, stoke-hold, chain locker and on the grating above the boilers were packed refugees, like sardines in a box. As they began to steam and dry out with the heat I wished more than ever that I had let them remain to be eaten alive if need be by the gentle citizens of the Caucasus. About midnight it became very rough and a great fear seemed to seize one and all of my dear passengers. Every little while they would break out of their retreats and rush out on the deck under the impression that we were sinking. Then the first wave that swept us would soak them to the skin and with piercing howls they would scuttle back to the place where they belonged. All night long this kept up until for the first time I felt that shipwreck might not be such an unmixed evil after all. Any change would be preferable to this. By one A. M. I had decided that my refugees should start life anew at Trebizond, and that not one foot further should they go with me. They might get another boat from there if they so desired, but not the *France!* At daylight they began to beg for food and sat around the head of my companion-way like so many apes watching me

eat my breakfast. Above my head were a dozen faces peering eagerly through the skylight. Finally I sent them all to the galley and ordered Stomati to give them breakfast.

At nine we anchored in Trebizond and I sighed with relief, for it seemed to me that my troubles with the refugee problem were over, if nothing else pleasant ever happened again.

After their rough night at sea mingled with fear and seasickness my passengers were as eager to disembark as we all were to get rid of them, and even before we anchored they were crowded at the gangway waiting to land. But alas! We had reckoned without our host! The rat-eyed governor saw a chance to display his authority. When I went ashore to arrange for relieving myself of the refugees he promptly replied that it could not be done. After an involved argument which accomplished nothing I appealed to the acting consul who lived on the bluff and accompanied by him and the missionary who lived in town, we made another assault on the potentate who was giving himself such airs. Finally he agreed to go out to the *France* and look over my importations. All of these negotiations had taken time and the refugees had become restless and anxious as to their fate and when they saw the governor's boat with armed soldiers coming out toward them a panic seized them, or at least some of them, which I thought curious at the time, but saw a possible reason for before the day was over.

With as much dignity as though he had been the Sultan himself our dirty visitor climbed over the side and demanded that the men from the Caucasus be placed in line before him and show their passports. He evidently thought that he had me there, and that none would be forthcoming, for his face fell visibly when each and every one of the trembling wretches produced the frayed and filthy rags of paper from mysterious pockets in their garments. Some underling that belonged to the governor inspected the first passport and a long debate in Turkish ensued between the officials. The governor's countenance brightened perceptibly and with great dignity he spoke to the consul and then turned around and glared at me, no doubt feeling my lack of reverence for his august person.

"What does he say?" I asked the consul impatiently, for I was anxious to be off.

"He says," replied the consul, with just the shade of a deprecating smile, "that inasmuch as these passports have not been properly viséd in Batuum, it will be quite impossible for him to allow them to land here. You should have had the Turkish representative there inspect and countersign all these papers."

I was certainly indignant.

"Do you mean to say," I retorted with some heat, "that he insists on a visé from a port that is in a state of siege with people being killed in the streets? These men don't live in Batuum any-

way and most of them have come from towns in the interior and barely escaped with their lives. Besides some of them actually live here in Trebizond!" My reply was translated but my expression did not need an interpreter. The governor distinctly had the upper hand and sneeringly replied that the situation in Batuum was not due to him and that he did not care a rap whether the town was in a state of siege or not. "No visé no landing" was his ultimatum. I asked him what he expected me to do with them, to which he shrugged his shoulders scornfully and prepared to leave. I was too angry to engage in further discussion and as I watched him go over the side an inspiration broke upon me. So I merely remarked politely that I would think the matter over and would advise him later as to my decision. This obviously did not please him as he apparently did not see where I had any particular decision coming my way. So he only growled a surly reply as he rowed away.

As soon as he was gone I called a council of war in my saloon and proposed my plan. I figured on sailing from Trebizond to the mouth of the Danube and thence back to Russia, and it was obvious that there would be no welcome to my passengers in either of these places. My idea was that we would say no more about it but make all of our preparations to depart and just before we weighed anchor put all our refugees in our two ship's boats with their equipment of oars and just

simply leave them in the harbor. If the governor wanted to keep them adrift there with no food—well, then that would be his affair and not mine. He could drown them if he thought best, once they were off my hands. No one but Morris sympathized with my project, but I was running the enterprise, and issued the ultimatum and went ashore to send a cable before leaving.

But once again my plans were changed for there was an urgent cable awaiting me from Chicago: "Return Constantinople give up *France* proceed quickest possible St. Petersburg investigate Witte's charges against our correspondent there whom he asserts has misquoted him." So here was my whole program upset once more and for the first time my scheme for marooning my passengers began to seem injudicious. I could make no excuse for disobeying the governor at Trebizond if my next call was to be at a Turkish port. I thought a minute and my pet project evaporated. I would take them to the Golden Horn. But to forestall difficulties there I cabled Mr. Peter Jay, then chargé at our Embassy in Constantinople, that I was coming with refugees and to arrange to have the authorities take delivery of same on my arrival. Then I went back to the landing. The missionary, who was a lovely man and sympathized strongly with me, had been pleading with the governor for the refugees. While that mighty man stood bashfully by playing coyly with his sword tassels, the missionary

delicately intimated to me that his Excellency on account of his good impression of me and of his desire to oblige, would waive the formalities of the passport visés and allow the unfortunates to land if I could see my way clear to defray his trouble in the matter for the sum of five pounds sterling per refugee. The old swine! I was indignant! I told the missionary that he could tell his fat friend that I would see him sizzling first and that I was going straight back to Constantinople, where I knew a general who was close to the Sultan and I would stay there a month if necessary but I certainly intended to get him "fired" for a rotten old grafter. I could not speak his language and the missionary declined to translate—so I left. I am afraid the Turk never really knew all I thought of him, but he did know that his generous offer was turned down, for his face flushed crimson and he spun on his heel and went to his office. I decided not to wait for him to make another move and so I jumped into the boat and pulled for the *France*. As soon as I was within calling distance I shouted to the skipper to get up the anchor, and as I stepped over the side, her engines were already turning over and her nose coming around toward the sea. I had sent Morris directly from the cable office to buy food of the refugee type and we brought off a boatload of cabbages and green things which should keep them until we could put them ashore at Constantinople.

It was about nine-thirty that night as we were spinning merrily along over a fair sea, when the chief engineer came into my saloon. His face was like putty.

"What is wrong?" I asked with some apprehension, for he was the pluckiest of the lot.

For reply he threw on the table two large coils of fuses, the type one uses to set off a bomb or dynamite cartridges. I recognized them at once, for I had used the identical thing in a little dynamiting enterprise of my own a few years before.

"Where did these come from?" I asked sharply, looking at his white face.

"One of the stokers found them in the coal bunkers," he replied quietly, and then added tensely, "and he nearly put them in the furnace with the coal."

"Well, these are only fuses," I said to reassure him. "They won't do any thing but fizzle a bit."

He smiled a bit sadly.

"Yes, I know that," he replied, "but has it occurred to you that the man who carries fuses is apt to have the caps and the charge that they are meant to explode? And has it occurred to you that whoever put the fuse in the bunker probably put in the bomb as well? And has it occurred to you that at any moment they may go into the furnace by mistake with the coal? And has it occurred to you that when they do we will all go to Kingdom Come?"

This was certainly a new idea. No, it had not occurred to me at all. However, it did strike me as being a pertinent thought now that he spoke of it and I sat on the edge of my berth, with the shoe I had been removing still in my hand. Finally something else occurred to me as well and after a moment's deliberation I replied, "You go right back to the stokehold, Chief, and explain the whole situation to the stokers. If they put a bomb in the furnace they will all be scalded to death beyond a shadow of a doubt. The rest of us have a chance to get away. Not a big one—but still it is a chance anyway. The stokers down there have not the most remote hope if they should make a blunder like that. Explain it carefully to them and then you go to bed. For it is my guess that under the circumstances they won't put anything in the furnace to-night that does not bear a very decided resemblance to good black coal."

The Chief thought a little and then went and did as I had suggested. In fifteen minutes he returned with the word that the day shift of stokers had turned out and, assisted by the balance of the crew not otherwise occupied, were making a careful personal inspection of every shovelful that went into the furnace. We both laughed a little and decided that we could safely turn in and sleep soundly.

But before I did so I called the skipper in for council. We talked it all over and decided that

someone of our refugees had had the explosives on him and when we got into the row with the governor at Trebizond and it looked as though there were to be an examination of passengers, the guilty man had become panic stricken and, prying up the bunker lid on the deck, had dropped the damaging evidence against himself into the bunker, never doubting that he would be well ashore at Trebizond before the *France* was at sea again. He must also be passing a restless night knowing what was in the bunkers.

This time I was more than indignant!

It seemed a poor return for all the pains that I had taken in behalf of these wretched people. I called in Morris and told him that I wanted him to watch the refugees carefully from this time on, as I suspected that one of them at least, might be a desperate man, and the Lord only knew what he might be up to before we landed back in the Golden Horn.

"Now, Morris," I told him, "I am going to assign you to watch these men just as carefully as you know how and if you see the slightest sign of a single one of them making any move which in your judgment is going to endanger the *France* and the lives of any of us I want you to shoot him on the spot!" And I gave him my big army Colt.

The black man's face shone with excitement and his teeth gleamed, as he replied:

"Yes, sir; yes, sir. I'll do just as you say, sir. And if I see anything suspicious, I'll shoot him

right through the head, sir," and he went on deck to look for symptoms.

But it proved unnecessary. Whether anything more was in the bunkers or not we never knew. Suffice it to say that we did not blow up, but kept blithely on our way towards the mouth of the Bosphorus, whence we had steamed nearly two weeks before.

CHAPTER XIV

The Return to the Golden Horn and the End of the Assignment

It was just four o'clock three days later on the afternoon of December 30th that the tired little *France* poked her steel nose into the waters of the Bosphorus and, running around the first promontory, dropped her anchor in quiet waters just off the Turkish fort that stands sentinel at the eastern end of that wonderful cleft in the mountains that divide the East from the West, Asia and her mediæval civilization from Europe and all her enlightened progress. Half an hour served to pass us through the customs and with hearts rejoicing and care free we steamed on through that picturesque gap. As we sailed around the bend I stood on the bridge and watched the dull, grim waters of the Black Sea cut off from view by the rising headlands. It was one of our typical days. The barometer was falling and the wind was coming up and the surly sea without was beating itself into one of its chronic rages that we knew so well, and its white caps and froth seemed to whip angrily after us almost as though we were its natural prey and that it now beheld us eluding its maw.

With each turn of the screw we were getting into smoother water and in a few minutes were cutting up the still surface as a knife passes through cheese.

The relief of having it all over was excessive and I dare say we all behaved like children. I am sure that I did. I ordered up our good old American flag under which I had sailed for four months in the mine-sown waters off Port Arthur, the year before, and which during these last weeks had been snapping almost constantly at our fore, whipped by the bleak winter winds of the Black Sea. Its ends were frayed and raveled by the constant gales, yet with all its dirt of travel and disheveled parts, it looked good enough to me as it floated proudly at our masthead as we plowed serenely down the Bosphorus. I stationed Stomati at the stern to stand by the halyards of our big French ensign which, designating the nationality of our register, spread its ample bunting from our stern. And not a boat did we pass that did not get a cordial dip from us, and not a boat did we pass but I saw the men on the bridge turn and study through their glasses that rarely seen emblem that we bore at our foremast-head. Just before reaching the Golden Horn one passes Roberts College, perched high above the Bosphorus on a great bluff. The college, as all good Americans know, was founded by Dr. Washburn, one of our own true citizens who has brought greater glory

to our Name and Flag in the Near East than all the ambassadors and warships that ever penetrated that remote land. With childish glee I went below to the engineer and bade him turn out all of his stokers and heap on all the coal he could crowd into the furnaces and speed up the engines to their topmost notch, for, as I told him, "I want the *France* to look and do her prettiest as we pass the American College."

I returned to the bridge and swelled with pride as I glanced at the dense columns of smoke pouring majestically from our two chubby funnels, and the white wake that our screw was turning up astern as the engines beat out their maximum energy down in the bowels of the ship. As we were fairly abeam of the College I pulled the whistle lever and the deep fog-horn bayed out its hoarse-throated blast. For a solid minute it roared and then came the response from the hill. Someone had heard the tumult and recognized the emblem that we carried, and in a jiffy windows were thrown open, and handkerchiefs, towels and sheets were waved frantically toward us. Again and again the *France* tooted in response and again and again Stomati dipped our ensign in salute, while the crew cheered hysterically, just as though they were all Americans.

"What a childish performance," thinks the reader. No doubt it was. But after one has been at sea surrounded by indifference and hos-

tility by the peoples one encounters and attacked by savage seas for two solid weeks, isn't one to be forgiven a slight slip from dignity?

An hour later we were alongside the wharf and friends from the shore who had been advised that we had entered the Bosphorus came aboard to welcome us safely back. On the wharf was drawn up a company of savage-looking Turkish soldiers. They proved to be the Sultan's welcome to his prodigals, returning from the storm-tossed Caucasus. I have never just fathomed the status of a refugee in Turkey, but I gathered then that it must be against the law to escape slaughter in a foreign land and come home to your own. Anyway my refugees were promptly marched off to jail, and they, their past and future faded forever from my interest.

I found wires urging me make haste for Russia and so turning the *France* over to her owners I hurried to the Pera-Palace Hotel and got into some clean clothes and while Morris was throwing my baggage together for the Berlin train, I was making my formal calls. First on Mr. Jay at the American Legation, who welcomed me cordially and showed me the wire all drawn and addressed to the State Department at Washington, advising them that the *France* had been wrecked. For two days it had lain on his desk and only been held up on receipt of my wire from Trebizond that I was on my way back to the Golden Horn. Now for the first time I learned in full of the wide-

spread havoc of wreck and misery that storm had caused these past ten days. Dozens of ships had suffered disaster and the hope of the *France's* safety, it appeared, had been well-nigh abandoned. But it was all passed now and Jay and I laughed at it that night as we sat in our evening clothes over our wine and cigars at the Club. A few words with the British Ambassador and the turning over of my mails and dispatches and my duties in Constantinople were over.

The carefully prepared cable from the Caucasus I had brought with me, and not daring to trust it to the Turkish wire, I had given it into the hands of a courier who had caught a train within the hour for the frontier where he had filed it in an uncensored telegraph office. I waited in the hotel for the few hours to elapse before a wire came to me from our London office confirming its safe arrival and then with my impedimenta I was on the train once more, hurrying for the Russian capital.

My story is almost done.

The situation was quietly adjusting itself.

Five nights I spent on the train and on the morning of the sixth day I was on the Nevsky Prospekt once more. Two weeks sufficed to reorganize our news service in Russia and to turn the situation over to our correspondent whose duty it was to look after affairs in that territory.

I had been doing war assignments pretty stead-